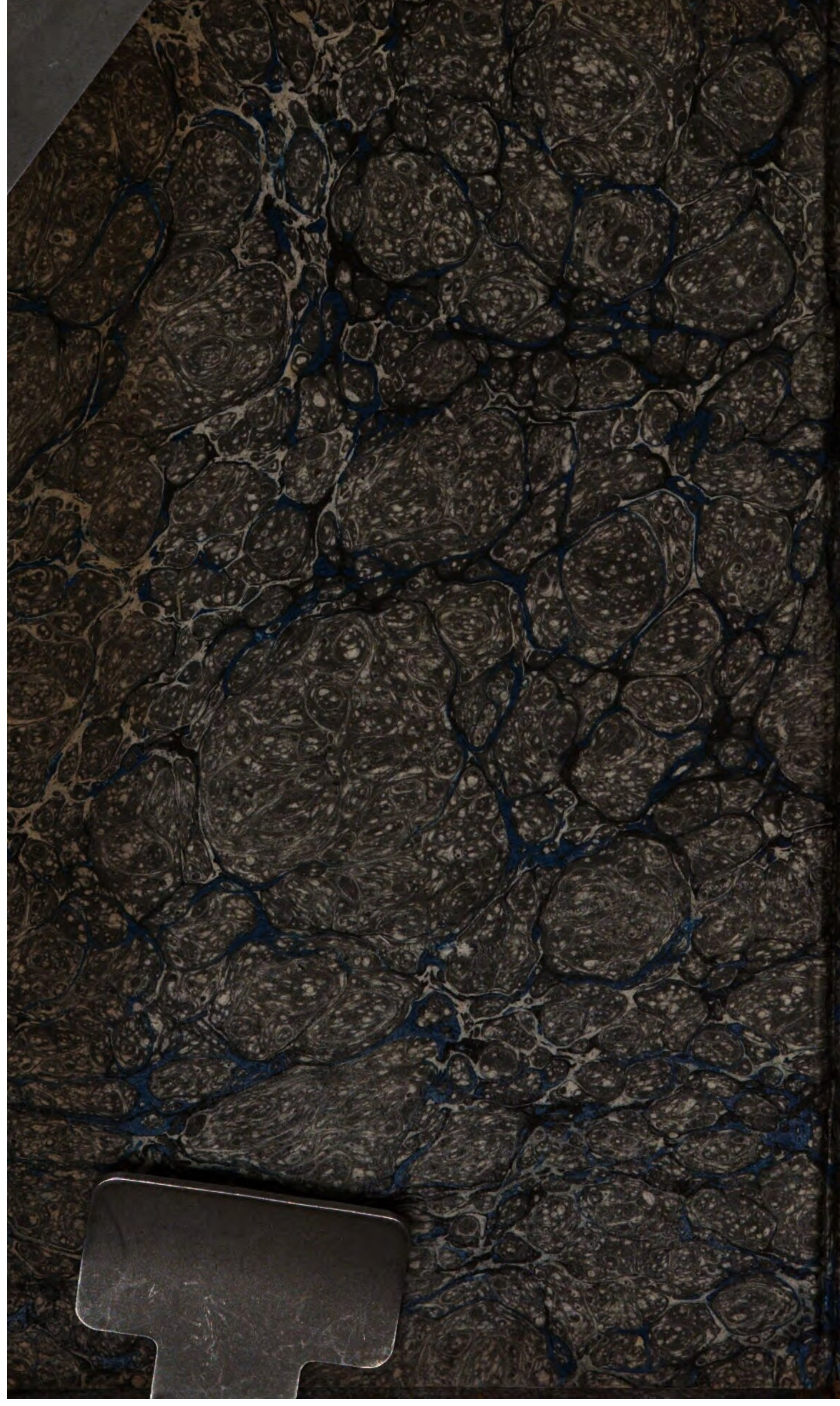








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THE
G R O U N D S
AND
O C C A S I O N S

OF THE
Contempt of the Clergy and Religion
enquired into;

In a LETTER to R. L.
WITH
O B S E R V A T I O N S
O N A N

Answer to the Enquiry, in a second
LETTER to the SAME.

By JOHN EACHARD, D. D.
Late MASTER of CATHERINE-HALL,

AND
VICE-CHANCELLOR of the UNIVERSITY
of CAMBRIDGE.

A New Edition, Revised and Corrected.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N:

Printed for T. DAVIES, in Ruffel-Street, Covent-Garden.

M D C C L X X I I.

THE
GRUND
AND
OCCASIONS
OF THE

Contempt of the Clergy and Religion
expressed in;

In a LETTER to R. L.

WITH

OBSERVATIONS

ON A

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Answer to the Inquiry, in a
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VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed by T. Davies, in Russell-Street, Covent-Garden.

MDCCLXXII.

Dr. EACHARD's
WORKS,

CONTAINING

- I. The Grounds and Occasions of the Contempt of the CLERGY and RELIGION enquired into ; in a Letter to R. L.
- II. Observations on an Answer to the Enquiry ; in a Second Letter to the Same.
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MDCCLXXII.

THE
PREFACE
TO THE
READER.

I Can very easily fancy, that many, upon the very first sight of the title, will presently imagine, that the author does either want the great tithes, lying under the pressure of some pitiful vicarage; or that he is much out of humour, and dissatisfied with the present condition of affairs; or lastly, that he writes to no purpose at all, there having been abundance of unprofitable advisers in this kind.

As to my being under some low church dispensation you may know I write not out of a pinching necessity, or out of any rising design; and you may please to believe, that although I have a most solemn reverence for the Clergy in
a general

general, and especially for that of England; yet, for my own part, I must confess to you, I am not of that holy employment; and have as little thought of being Dean or Bishop, as they that think so have hopes of being all Lord-keepers.

Nor less mistaken will they be, that shall judge me in the least discontented, or any ways disposed to disturb the peace of the present settled church: For in good truth, I have neither lost kings nor bishops lands, that should incline me to a surly and quarrelsome complaining; as many be, who would have been glad enough to see His Majesty restored, and would have endured bishops daintily well, had they lost no money by their coming in. I am not, I will assure you, any of those occasional writers, that missing preferment in the university, can presently write you their new ways of education; or being a little tormented with an ill chosen wife, set forth the doctrine of divorce to be truly evangelical

gelical : The cause of these few sheets was honest and innocent, and as free from all passion, as any design.

As for the last thing which I supposed objected, viz. That this book is altogether needless, there having been an infinite number of church and clergy-menders, that have made many tedious and unsuccessful offers ; I must needs confess, that it were here unreasonable for me to expect a better reward : Only thus much I think with modesty may be said, that I cannot at present call to mind any thing that is propounded, but what is very hopeful, and easily accomplished. For indeed, should I go about to tell you, that a child can never prove a profitable instructor of the people, unless born when the sun is in Aries, or brought up in a school that stands full south ; that he can never be able to govern a parish, unless he can ride the great horse ; or that he can never go through the great work of the ministry, unless for three hundred years backward

backward it can be proved that none of his family ever had cough, ague, or gray hair; then I should very patiently endure to be reckoned amongst the vaineſt that ever made attempt. But believe me, reader, I am not, as you will eaſily ſee, any contriver of an incorruptible and pure chryſtalline church; or any expecter of a reign full of nothing but ſaints and worthies; but only an honeſt and hearty wiſher, that the beſt of our Clergy might for ever continue as they are, rich and learned; and that the reſt might be very uſeful, and well eſteemed of in their profeſſion.

THE
GROUNDS and OCCASIONS
OF THE
CONTEMP
T
OF THE
CLERGY and RELIGION
ENQUIRED INTO.

SIR,

THAT short discourse, which we lately had concerning the clergy, continues so fresh in your mind, that I perceive, by your last, you are more than a little troubled to observe that disesteem that lies upon several of those holy men. Your good wishes for the church, I know, are very strong and unfeigned, and your hopes of the world receiving much more advantage, and better

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advice,

advice, from some of the clergy than usually it is found by experience to do, are neither needless nor impossible. And as I have always been a devout admirer, as well as a strict observer of your actions ; so I have constantly taken a great delight to concur with you in your very thoughts. Whereupon it is, Sir, that I have spent some few hours upon that which was the occasion of your last letter, and the subject of our late discourse. And before, Sir, I enter upon telling you what are my apprehensions ; I must most heartily profess, that for my own part, I did never think, since at all I understood the excellency and perfection of a church, but that ours now lately restored, as formerly established, does far outgo, as to all christian ends and purposes, either the pomp and bravery of Rome herself, or the best of free spiritual states. But if so it be allowable where we have so undoubtedly learned and honourable a clergy, to suppose that some of that sacred profession, might possibly have attained to a greater degree of esteem and usefulness to the world ; then I hope what has thus long hindered so great and desirable a blessing to this nation, may be modestly guessed at ; either without giving any wilful offence to the present church ; or any great trouble dear, Sir, to yourself :

yourself : And if I be not very much mistaken, whatever has heretofore or does at present lessen the value of our clergy, or render it any degree less serviceable to the world than might be reasonably hoped, may be easily referred to two very plain things ; the ignorance of some, and the poverty of others of the clergy.

And first, as to the ignorance of some of our clergy ; if we would make a search to purpose, we must go as deep as the very beginnings of education ; and, doubtless, may lay a great part of our misfortunes to the old-fashioned methods and discipline of schooling itself : Upon the well ordering of which, although much of the improvement of our clergy cannot be denied mainly to depend ; yet by reason this is so well known to yourself, as also, that there has been many of undoubted learning and experience, that have set out their several models for this purpose ; I shall therefore only mention such loss of time and abuse of youth, as is most remarkable and mischievous, and as could not be conveniently omitted in a discourse of this nature, though never so short.

And first of all, it were certainly worth the considering, whether it be unavoidably necessary to keep lads to sixteen or seventeen

years of age, in pure slavery to a few Latin and Greek words? Or whether it may not be more convenient, especially if we call to mind their natural inclinations to ease and idleness, and how hardly they are persuaded of the excellency of the liberal arts and sciences, any further than the smart of the last piece of discipline is fresh in their memories; whether, I say, it be not more proper and beneficial, to mix with those unpleasant tasks and drudgeries, something that in probability might not only take much better with them, but might also be much easier obtained?

As suppose, some part of time was allotted them for the reading of some innocent English authors; where they need not go every line so unwillingly to a tormenting dictionary; and whereby they might come in a short time to apprehend common sense; and to begin to judge what is true: For you shall have lads that are arch knaves at the nominative case, and that have a notable quick eye at spying out the verb, who for want of reading such common and familiar books, shall understand no more of what is plain and easy, than a well educated dog or horse. Or suppose, they were taught (as they might much easier be than what is commonly offered to them) the principles

principles of arithmetic, geometry, and such alluring parts of learning: As these things undoubtedly would be much more useful, so much more delightful to them, than to be tormented with a tedious story how Phaeton broke his neck; or how many nuts and apples Tytirus had for his supper: For most certainly youths, if handsomely dealt with, are much inclinable to emulation, and to a very useful esteem of glory; and more especially if it be the reward of knowledge; and therefore if such things were carefully and discreetly propounded to them, wherein they might not only earnestly contend amongst themselves, but might also see how far they outskill the rest of the world; a lad hereby would think himself high and mighty, and would certainly take great delight in contemning the next unlearned mortal he meets withal. But if instead hereof, you diet him with nothing but rules and exceptions; with tiresome repetitions of *amo's* and *τυπῶν's*; setting a day also apart to recite verbatim all the burdensome task of the foregoing week, (which I am confident is usually as dreadful as an old parliament fast) we must needs believe that such a one, thus managed, will scarce think to prove immortal by such performances and accomplishments as these. You know

very well, Sir, that lads in the general, have but a kind of ugly and odd conception of learning; and look upon it as such a starving thing, and unnecessary perfection, (especially as it is usually dispensed out unto them) that nine-pins and span-counter are judged much more heavenly employments: And therefore what pleasure, do we think, can such a one take, in being bound to get against breakfast two or three hundred rumpers out of Homer, in commendation of Achilles's toes, or the Grecian's boots? Or to have measured out unto him, very early in the morning, fifteen or twenty well laid on lashes, for letting a syllable slip too soon, or hanging too long upon it; doubtless, instant execution upon such grand miscarriages as these, will eternally engage him to a most admirable opinion of the muses.

Lads, certainly, ought to be won by all possible arts and devices; and though many have invented fine pictures and games, to cheat them into the undertaking of unreasonable burdens, yet this, by no means, is such a lasting temptation, as the propounding of that, which in itself is pleasant and alluring: For we shall find very many, though of no excelling quickness, will soon perceive the design of the landkip, and so looking through the veil, will then begin to

to take as little delight in those pretty contrivances, as in getting by heart three or four leaves of ungayed nonsense.

Neither seems the stratagem of money to be so prevailing and catching, as a downright offering of such books which are ingenious and convenient; there being but very few so intolerably careful of their bellies, as to look upon the hopes of a cake, or a few apples, to be a sufficient recompence for cracking their pates with a heap of independent words.

I am not sensible, that I have said any thing in disparagement of those two famous tongues, the Greek and Latin, there being much reason to value them beyond others; because the best of human learning has been delivered unto us in those languages. But he that worships them, purely out of honour to Rome and Athens, having little or no respect to the usefulness and excellency of the books themselves, (as many do) it is a sign he has a great esteem and reverence of antiquity, but I think him by no means comparable for happiness to him who catches frogs, or hunts butterflies.

That some languages therefore ought to be studied, is in a manner absolutely necessary, unless all were brought to one (which would be the happiest thing the world.

world could wish for ;) but whether the beginning of them, might not be more insensibly instilled, and more advantageously obtained, by reading philosophical, as well as other ingenious authors, than Janua Linguarum's crabbed poems, and cross-grained prose ; as it hath been heretofore by others, so it ought to be afresh considered by all well-wishers, either to the clergy or learning.

I know where it is the fashion of some schools to prescribe a lad, for his evening refreshment, out of Commenius, all the terms of art, belonging to Anatomy, Mathematics, or some such piece of learning. Now, is it not a very likely thing that a lad should take most absolute delight in conquering such a pleasant task, where, perhaps, he has two or three hundred words to keep in mind, with a very small proportion of sense thereunto belonging ; whereas the use and full meaning of those difficult terms would have been most insensibly obtained, by leisurely reading in particular this or the other science ? Is it not also likely to be very favourable, and of comfortable use to one, that can scarce distinguish between virtue and vice, to be tasked with high and moral poems ? For example, it is usually said, by those that are intimately acquainted

acquainted with him, that Homer's Iliads and Odyssseys contain mystically all the Moral Law for certain, if not a great part of the Gospel, (I suppose much after that rate, that Rabelais said his Gargantua contained all the Ten Commandments) but perceivable only to those that have a poetical discerning spirit; with which gift, I suppose few at school are so early qualified. Those admirable verses, Sir, of yours both English and others, which you have sometimes favoured me with a sight of, will not suffer me to be so sottish, as to slight or undervalue so great and noble an accomplishment. But the committing of such high and brave senced poems to a school-boy, whose main business is to search out cunningly the antecedent and the relative, to lie at catch for a spruce phrase, a proverb, or a quaint and pithy sentence, is not only to very little purpose, but that having gargled only those elegant books at school, this serves them instead of reading them afterward, and does in a manner prevent their being further looked into: So that all the improvement, whatsoever it be, that may be reaped out of the best and choicest poets, is for the most part utterly lost; in that a time is usually chosen of reading them, when discretion is much wanting to gain

thence any true advantage. Thus that admirable and highly useful piece of morality Tully's Offices, because it is a book commonly construed at school, is generally afterwards so contemned by academics, that it is a long hour's work to convince them, that it is worthy of being looked into again, because they reckon it as a book read over at school, and no question notably digested.

If therefore the ill methods of schooling does not only occasion a great loss of time there, but also does beget in lads a very odd opinion and apprehension of learning, and much disposes them to be idle, when got a little free from the usual severities ; and that the hopes of more or less improvement in the universities, very much depend here-upon, it is, without all doubt, the great concernment of all that wish well to the church, that such care and regard be had to the management of schools, that the clergy be not so much obstructed in their first attempts and preparations to learning.

I cannot, Sir, possibly be so ignorant, as not to consider, that what has been now offered upon this argument, has not only been largely insisted on by others, but also refers not particularly to the clergy, (whose welfare and esteem I seem at present in a special manner

manner solicitous about) but in general to all learned professions, and therefore might reasonably have been omitted; which certainly I had done, had I not called to mind, that of those many, that propound to themselves learning for a profession, there is scarce one of ten, but that his lot, choice or necessity determines him to the study of divinity.

Thus, Sir, I have given you my thoughts concerning the orders and customs of common schools: A consideration, in my apprehension, not slightly to be weighed; being that to me seems hereupon very much to depend the learning and wisdom of the clergy, and the prosperity of the church.

The next unhappiness, that seems to have hindered some of our clergy from arriving to that degree of understanding, that becomes such an holy office, whereby their company and discourses might be much more than they commonly are valued and desired, is, the inconsiderate sending of all kind of lads to the universities, let their parts be never so low and pitiful, and the instructions they have lain under never so mean and contemptible, and the purses of their friends never so short to maintain them there. If they have but the commendation of some lamentable and pitiful construing-master, it

passes for sufficient evidence, that they will prove persons very eminent in the church. That is to say, if a lad has but a lusty and well-bearing memory; (this being the usual and almost only thing whereby they judge of their abilities) if he can sing over very tunably three or four stanzas of Lilly's poetry, be very quick and ready to tell what's Latin for all the instruments belonging to his father's shop; if presently, upon the first scanning, he know a spondee from a dactyl, and can fit a few of those same without any sense to his fingers ends: if lastly, he can say perfectly by heart his Academic Catechism, in pure and passing Latin, i. e. *What is his Name? Where went he to school? and what author is he best and chiefly skilled in?* A forward boy, cries the school-master, a very pregnant child! ten thousand pities, but he should be a scholar: He proves a brave clergyman, I'll warrant you. Away to the university he must needs go; then for a little Logic, a little Ethics, and, God knows, a very little of every thing else, and the next time you meet him is in the pulpit.

Neither ought the mischief which arises from small country schools to pass unconsidered; the little governors whereof, having, for the most part, not sucked in above

six or seven mouthfuls of university air, must yet by all means suppose themselves so notably furnished with all sorts of instructions, and are so ambitious of the glory of being counted able to send forth now and then to Oxford or Cambridge, from the little house by the church-yard's side, one of their ill-educated disciples, that to such as these oft-times is committed the guidance and instruction of a whole parish, whose parts and improvements duly considered, will scarce render them fit governors of a small grammar castle. Not that it is necessary to believe, that there never was a learned or useful person in the church, but such whose education had been at Westminster or St. Paul's: but, whereas most of the small schools, being, by their first founders designed only for the advantage of poor parish children; and also that the stipend is usually so small and discouraging, that very few, who can do much more than teach to write and read, will accept of such preferment; for these to pretend to rig out their small ones for an university life, proves oft times a very great inconvenience and damage to the church.

And as many such dismal things are sent forth thus with very small tackling, so not a few are predestinated thither by their friends,
from

from the fore-sight of a good benefice. If there be rich pasture, profitable customs, and that Henry the eighth has taken out no toll, the holy land is a very good land, and affords abundance of milk and honey: far be it from their consciences the considering whether the lad is likely to be serviceable to the church, or to make wiser and better any of his parishioners.

All this may seem at first sight to be easily avoided by a strict examination at the universities, and so returning by the next carrier all that was sent up not fit for their purpose. But because many of their relations are oft times of an inferior condition; and who either by imprudent counsellors, or else out of a tickling conceit of their sons being, forsooth, an university scholar, have purposely omitted all other opportunities of a livelihood, to return such, would seem a very sharp and severe disappointment. Possibly it might be much better if parents themselves, or their friends, would be much more wary of determining their children to the trade of learning. And if some of undoubted knowledge and judgment, would offer their advice, and speak their hopes of a lad about thirteen or fourteen years of age, (which I assure you, Sir, may be done without conjuring:) and never omit to enquire whether

whether his relations are able and willing to maintain him seven years at the university, or see some certain way of being continued there so long, by the help of friends or others ; as also upon no such conditions, as shall in likelihood deprive him of the greatest part of his studies.

For it is a common fashion of a great many, to compliment and invite inferior people's children to the university, and there pretend to make such an all-bountiful provision for them, as they shall not fail of coming to a very eminent degree of learning : but when they come there, they shall save a servant's wages. They took therefore heretofore a very good method to prevent Sizars over-heating their brains : bed-making, chamber-sweeping, and water-fetching, were doubtless great preservatives against too much vain philosophy. Now certainly such pretended favours and kindnesses as these, are the most downright discourtesies in the world. For it is ten times more happy, both for a lad and the church, to be a corn-cutter, or a tooth-drawer, to make or mend shoes, to be of any inferior profession, than to be invited to, and promised the conveniences of a learned education, and to have his name only stand airing upon the the college

lege tables, and his chief business shall be to buy eggs and butter.

Neither ought lads parts, before they be determined to the university, be only considered, and likelihood of not being disappointed in their studies, but also abilities or hopes of being maintained until they be masters of arts. For whereas two hundred, for the most part, yearly commence, scarce the fifth part of these continue after their taking the first degree. As for the rest, having exactly learned, *quid est logica?* and *quot sunt virtutes morales?* down they go by the first carrier, upon the top of the pack, into the west or north, or elsewhere, according as their estates lie, with Burgerfdicius, Eustachius, and such great helps of divinity; and then for the propagation of the gospel. By that time they can say the predicaments and creed, they have their choice of preaching or starving. Now, what a champion for truth is such a thing likely to be? what a huge blaze he makes in the church? what a raiser of doctrines? what a confounder of heresies? what an able interpreter of hard places? what a resolver of cases of conscience? and what a prudent guide must he needs be to all his parish.

You

You may, possibly think, Sir, that this so early preaching might be easily avoided by with-holding holy orders, the church having very prudently constituted in her canons, that none under twenty-three years of age (which is the usual age after seven years being at the university) should be admitted to that great employment.

This indeed might seem to do some service, were it carefully observed: and were there not a thing to be got, called a dispensation, which will presently make you as old as you please.

But if you will, Sir, we'll suppose that orders were strictly denied to all, unless qualified according to canon. I cannot foresee any other remedy, but that most of those university youngsters must fall to the parish, and become a town charge, until they be of spiritual age. For philosophy is a very idle thing, when one is cold: and a small system of divinity (though it be Wollebius himself) is not sufficient when one is hungry. What then shall we do with them, and where shall we dispose of them until they come to an holy ripeness? may we venture them into the desk to read service? that cannot be, because not capable: besides, the tempting pulpit usually stands too near. Or, shall we trust them in some good gentlemens houses,

houses, there to perform holy things? with all my heart; so that they may not be called down from their studies to say grace to every health: that they may have a little better wages than the cook or butler: as also that there may be a groom in the house, besides the chaplain; (for sometimes to the ten pounds a year, they crowd the looking after a couple of geldings :) and that he may not be sent from table, picking his teeth, and sighing with his hat under his arm, whilst the knight and my lady eat up the tarts and chickens: it may be also convenient, if he were suffered to speak now and then in the parlour, besides at grace and prayer time: and that my cousin Abigail and he sit not too near one another at meals: nor be presented together to the little vicarage. All this, Sir, must be thought of: for in good earnest, a person at all thoughtful of himself and conscience, had much better chuse to live with nothing but beans and pease-pottage (so that they may have the command of his thoughts and time) than to have his second and third courses, and to obey the unreasonable humours of some families.

And, as some think, two or three years continuance in the university, to be time sufficient for being very great instruments in
the

the church; so others we have so moderate as to count that a solemn admission, and a formal paying of college detriments, without the trouble of philosophical discourses, disputations, and the like, are virtues that will influence as far as Newcastle, and improve though at never so great a distance.

So strangely possessed are people, in general, with the easiness and small preparations that are requisite to the undertaking of the ministry, that, whereas in other professions they plainly see what considerable time is spent, before they have any hopes to arrive to skill enough to practise, with any confidence, what they have designed; yet to preach to ordinary people, and govern a country-parish, is usually judged such an easy performance, that any body counts himself fit for the employment. We find very few so unreasonably confident of their own parts, as to profess either law or physic, without either a considerable continuance in some of the inns of court, or an industrious search into herbs, anatomy, chymistry and the like; unless it be only to make a bond, or give a clyster. But, as for the knack of preaching, as they call it, that is such a very easy attainment, that he is counted dull to purpose that is not able at a very small warning.

warning, to fasten upon any text of scripture; and to tear and tumble it till the glass be out. Many, I know very well, are forced to discontinue, having neither stock of their own, nor friends to maintain them in the university. But whereas a man's profession and employment in this world, is very much in his own, or in the choice of such who are most nearly concerned for him: he therefore that foresees that he is not likely to have the advantage of a continued education, he had much better commit himself to an approved of cobbler or tinker, wherein he may be duly respected according to his office and condition of life, than to be only a disesteemed pettifogger or empiric in divinity.

By this time, Sir, I hope you begin to consider, what a great disadvantage it has been to the church and religion, the meer venturous and inconsiderate determining of youths to the profession of learning.

There is still one thing by a very few at all minded, that ought also to be overlooked; and that is a good constitution and health of body. And therefore discreet and wise physicians ought also to be consulted, before an absolute resolve be made to live the life of the learned. For he that has strength enough to buy and bargain, may

may be of a very unfit habit of body to sit still so much, as, in general, is requisite to a competent degree of learning: for although reading and thinking break neither legs nor arms, yet certainly there is nothing that so flags the spirits, disorders the blood, and enfeebles the whole body of man, as intense studies. As for him that rives blocks, or carries packs, there is no great expence of parts, no anxiety of mind, no great intellectual pensiveness: let him but wipe his forehead, and he is perfectly recovered. But he that has many languages to remember; the nature almost of the whole world to consult; many histories, fathers, and councils to search into; if the fabric of his body be not strong and healthful, you will soon find him as thin as metaphysics, and look as piercing as school subtilty. This, Sir, could not be conveniently omitted; not only, because many are very careless of this point, and at a venture determine their young relations to learning: but because, for the most part, if amongst many, there be but one of all the family that is weak and sickly, that is languishing and consumptive, this is of all the rest, as counted not fit for any coarse employment, shall be picked out as a choice vessel for the church: whereas, most evidently, he is much more able to dig daily in the mines, than to sit cross-legged musing upon his book. I am

I am very sensible how obvious it might be here to hint, that this, so curious and severe inquiry, would much hinder the practice, and abate the flourishing of the universities : as also, there has been several, and are still many living creatures in the world, who, whilst young, were of a very slow and meek apprehension, have yet afterwards cheared up into a great briskness, and became masters of much reason : and others there have been, who, although forced to a short continuance in the university, and that oft times interrupted by unavoidable services, have yet, by a singular care and industry, proved very famous in their generation ; and lastly, some also of very feeble and crasy constitutions in their childhood, have out-studied their distempers, and have become very healthful, and serviceable to the church.

As for the flourishing, Sir, of the universities ; what has been before said, aims not, in the least, at gentlemen, whose coming thither is chiefly for the hope of single improvement, and whose estates do free them from the necessity of making a gain of arts and sciences ; but only at such as intend to make learning their profession, as well as accomplishment : so that our schools may be still as full of flourishings, of fine cloaths, rich gowns and future benefactors, as ever.

And

And suppose we do imagine, as it is not necessary we should, that the number should be a little lessened; this surely will not abate the true splendor of an university, in any man's opinion, but his, who reckons the flourishing thereof, rather from the multitude of meer gowns, than from the ingenuity and learning of those that wear them; no more than we have reason to count the flourishing of the church, from that vast number of people that crowd into holy orders, rather than from those learned and useful persons, that defend her truths, and manifest her ways.

But, I say, I do not see any perfect necessity, that our schools should hereupon be thinned and less frequented; having said nothing against the multitude, but the indiscreet choice. If therefore, instead of such either of inferior parts, or a feeble constitution, or of unable friends, there were picked out those that were of a tolerable ingenuity, of a study-bearing body, and had good hopes of being continued; as hence there is nothing to hinder our universities from being full, so likewise from being of great credit and learning.

Not to deny then, but that now and then there has been a lad of very submissive parts, and perhaps no great share of time allowed him for his studies, who hath proved, beyond

yond all expectation, brave and glorious: yet, surely, we are not to over reckon this so rare a hit, as to think that one such proving lad should make recompence and satisfaction for those many weak ones (as the common people love to phrase them) that are in the church. And that no care ought to be taken, no choice made, no maintenance provided or considered, because now and then in an age, one miraculously, beyond all hopes, proves learned and useful, is a practice, whereby never greater mischiefs and disesteem has been brought upon the clergy.

I have in short, Sir, run over what seemed to me the first occasions of that small learning, that is to be found amongst some of the clergy. I shall now pass from schooling to the universities.

I am not so unmindful of that devotion which I owe to those places, nor of that great esteem I profess to have of the guides and governors thereof, as to go about to prescribe new forms and schemes of education, where wisdom has laid her top stone. Neither shall I here examine which philosophy the old or new, makes the best sermons: it is hard to say that exhortations can be to no purpose, if the preacher believes that the earth turns round; or, that his

his reproofs can take no effect, unless he will suppose a vacuum. There have been good sermons, no question, made in the days of *materia prima*, and occult qualities: and there are doubtless still good discourses now under the reign of atoms.

There are but two things wherein I count the clergy chiefly concerned (as to university improvements) that at present I shall venture to make inquiry into.

And the first is this, whether or no it were not highly useful (especially for the clergy, who are supposed to speak English to the people) that English exercises were imposed upon lads, if not in public schools, yet at least privately. Not, but that I am abundantly satisfied that Latin, O Latin! 'tis the all in all, and the very cream of the jest, as also that oratory, is the same in all languages: the same rules being observed, the same method, the same arguments, and arts of persuasion; but yet it seems somewhat beyond the reach of ordinary youth, so to apprehend those general laws, as to make a just and allowable use of them in all languages, unless exercised particularly in them. Now, we know, the language that the very learned part of this nation must trust to live by, unless it be to make a bond, or prescribe a purge (which possibly may not

oblige or work so well in any other language as Latin) is the English. And after a lad has taken his leave of madam university, God bless him, he is not likely to deal afterward with much Latin, unless it be to chequer a sermon, or to say a Salvato to some travelling Dominatio Vestra. Neither is it enough to say, that the English is the language with which we are swaddled and rocked asleep, and therefore there needs none of this artificial and superadded care. For there be those that speak very well, plainly, and to the purpose, and yet write most pernicious and fantastical stuff: thinking, that whatsoever is written must be more than ordinary, must be beyond the guise of common speech, must favour of reading and learning, though to be altogether needless, and perfectly ridiculous.

Neither ought we to suppose it sufficient, that English books be frequently read, because there be of all sorts, good and bad, (and the worst are likely to be admired by youth more than the best) unless exercises be required of lads, whereby it may be guessed what their judgment is, where they may be mistaken, and what authors they propound to themselves for imitation. For by this means they may be corrected and advised early, according as occasion shall require: which

which if not done, their ill style will be so confirmed, and their improprieties of speech will become so natural, that it will be a very hard matter to stir or alter their fashion of writing. It is very curious to observe, what delicate letters your young students write, after they have got a little smack of university learning? In what elaborate heights and tossing nonsense will they greet a down-right English father, or a country friend! If there be a plain word in it, and such is used at home, this tastes not, say they, of education amongst philosophers, and it is counted damnable duncery and want of fancy: because your loving friend, or humble servant, is a common phrase in country letters; therefore, the young epistler is yours to the antipodes, or at least to the centre of the earth; and because ordinary folks love and respect you, therefore, you are to him, the pole star, a Jacob's staff, a load-stone, and a damask rose.

And the misery of it is, this pernicious accustomed way of expression, does not only oft times go along with them to their benefice, but accompanies them to the very grave: and for the most part, an ordinary cheesemonger, or plumb-seller, that scarce ever heard of an university, shall write much better sense, and more to the purpose than

these young philosophers, who injudiciously hunting only for great words, make themselves learnedly ridiculous.

Neither can it be easily apprehended, how the use of English exercises should any ways hinder the improvement in the Latin tongue, but rather be much to its advantage : and this may be easily believed, considering what dainty stuff is usually produced for a Latin entertainment. Chicken-broth is not thinner than that which is commonly offered for a piece of most pleading and convincing sense. For, I'll but suppose an academic youngster to be put upon a Latin oration : away he goes presently to his magazine of collected phrases ; he picks out all the glitterings he can find ; he hales in all proverbs, flowers, poetical snaps, tales out of the dictionary, or else ready latined to his hand out of Licofthenes : this done, he comes to the end of the table, and having made a submissive leg, and a little admired the number and understanding countenances of his auditors (let the subject be what it will) he falls presently into a most lamentable complaint of his insufficiency and tenuity : that he, poor thing, hath no acquaintance with above a muse and a half ; and that he never drunk above fize q. of Helicon, and you have put him here upon such a task (perhaps the business is
only

only, which is the noblest creature, a flea or a louse) that would much better fit some old foaker at Parnassus, than his sipping unexperienced bibbership. Alas, poor child! he is sorry at the very soul, that he has no better speech, and wonders in his heart that you will lose so much time as to hear him: for he has neither squibs nor fire-works, stars nor glories; the cursed carrier lost his best book of phrases, and the malicious mice and rats eat up all his pearls and golden sentences. Then he tickles over a little the skirts of the business: by and by for a similitude from the sun or moon, or if they be not at leisure, from the grey-eyed morn, a shady grove, or a purling stream: this done, he tells you that Barnaby-bright would be much too short for him to tell you all that he could say: and so, fearing he should break the thread of your patience, he concludes.

Now, it seems, Sir, very probable, that if lads did but first of all determine in English, what they intend to say in Latin, they would of themselves soon discern the triflingness of such apologies, the pitifulness of their matter, and the impertinency of their tales and fancies, and would, according to their subject, age, and parts, offer that which would be much more manly, and tolerable

sense. And, if I may tell you, Sir, what I really think, most of that ridiculousness, fantastical phrases, harsh, and sometimes blasphemous metaphors, abundantly foppish similitudes, childish and empty transitions, and the like, so commonly uttered out of pulpits, and so fatally redounding to the discredit of the clergy, may, in a great measure, be charged upon the want of that which we have here so much contended for.

The second enquiry that may be made, is this, whether or no punning, quibbling, and that which they call joking, and such other delicacies of wit, highly admired in some academic exercises, might not be very conveniently omitted? for one may desire but to know this one thing: in what profession shall that sort of wit prove of advantage? as for law, where nothing but the most reaching subtilty, and the closest arguing is allowed of, it is not to be imagined, that blending now and then a piece of a dry verse, and wreathing here and there an old Latin saying into a dismal jingle, should give title to an estate, or clear out an obscure evidence. And as little serviceable can it be to physick, which is made up of severe reason, and well tryed experiments. And as for divinity, in this place I shall say no more, but that those
usually

usually that have been rope-dancers in the schools, oft times prove jack-puddings in the pulpit. For he that in his youth has allowed himself this liberty of academic wit, by this means he has usually so thinned his judgment, becomes so prejudiced against sober sense, and so altogether disposed to trifling and jingling, that so soon as he gets hold of a text, he presently thinks that he has caught one of his old school-questions; and so falls a flinging it out of one hand into another, tossing it this way and that; lets it run a little upon the line, then Tanutus high Jingo, come again; here catching at a word, there lie nibbling and sucking at an and, a by, a quis, or a quid, a sic, and a sicut; and thus minces the text so small, that his parishioners, until he rendezvouse it again, can scarce tell what is become of it.

But, shall we debar youth of such an innocent and harmless recreation, of such a great quickener of parts, and promoter of sagacity? as for the first, its innocency, being allowed of for a time, I am so far from that persuasion, that from what has been before hinted, I count it perfectly contagious, and as a thing that for the most part infects the whole life, and influences upon most actions. For he that finds him-

self to have the right knack of letting off a joke, and of pleasing the humsters, he is not only very hardly brought off from admiring those goodly applauses, and heavenly shouts, but it is ten to one if he directs not the whole bent of his studies to such idle and contemptible books, as shall only furnish him with materials for a laugh, and so neglects all that should inform his judgment and reason, and make him a man of use and reputation in the world. And as for the pretence of making people sagacious and pertinently witty, I shall only desire that the nature of that kind of wit may be considered, which will be found to depend upon some such fooleries as these : as first of all, the lucky ambiguity of some word or sentence. Oh! what a happiness is it, and how much does a youngster count himself beholden to the stars, that should help him to such a taking jest? and whereas there be so many thousand words in the world, and that he should look upon the right one, that was so very much to his purpose, and that at the explosion made such a goodly report? or else they rake Lilly's grammar; and if they can but find two or three letters of any name in any of the rules or examples of that good man's works, it is as very a piece of wit, as any has passed in town since the king came in.

in. Oh! how the fresh men will skip to hear one of those lines well laughed at, that they have been so often yerked for? it is true, such things as these go for wit, so long as they continue in Latin; but what dismally shrimped things would they appear, if turned into English! And if we search into what was, or might be pretended, we shall find the advantages of Latin-wit to be very small and slender, when it comes into the world. I mean not only amongst strict philosophers, and men of meer notions, or amongst all damning and illiterate hectors; but amongst those that are truly ingenious, and judicious masters of fancy; we shall find what a quotation out of *qui mihi*, an axiom of logic, a saying of a philosopher, or the like, though managed with some quickness, and applied with some ingenuity, whatever they did heretofore, will not in our days pass, or be accepted for wit. For we must know, that as we are now in an age of great philosophers and men of reason, so of great quickness and fancy: and that Greek and Latin which heretofore, though never so impertinently fetched in, was counted admirable, because it had a learned twang, yet now, such stuff being out of fashion, is esteemed but very bad company. For the world is now, especially in discourse, for one
C 5 language,

language, and he that has somewhat in his mind of Greek or Latin, is requested now-a-days to be civil, and translate it into English for the benefit of the company. And he that has made it his whole business to accomplish himself for the applause of a company of boys, schoolmasters, and the easiest of country divines, and has been shouldered out of the cock-pit for his wit; when he comes into the world, is the most likely person to be kicked out of company, for his pedantry and over-weening opinion of himself. And, were it necessary, it is an easy matter to appeal to wits, both ancient and modern, that beyond all controversy, have been sufficiently approved of, that never, I am confident, received their improvements by employing their time in puns and quibbles. There is the prodigious Lucian, the great Don of Mancha, and there are many now living wits of our own, who never certainly were at all inspired from a Tripus's, Terræ Filius's, or Prævaricator's Speech.

I have ventured, Sir, thus far, not to find fault with, but only to enquire into an ancient custom or two of the universities, wherein the clergy seem to be a little concerned, as to their education there. I shall now look upon them as beneficed, and consider their preaching: wherein I pretend to give

give no rules, having neither any gift at it, nor authority to do it; but only shall make some conjectures at those useless and ridiculous things, commonly uttered in pulpits, that are generally disgusted, and are very apt to bring contempt upon the preacher, and that religion which he professes.

Amongst the first things that seem to be useless, may be reckoned the high tossing and swagging preaching; either mountingly eloquent, or profoundly learned. For there be a sort of divines, who if they do but happen of an unlucky hard word all the week, they think themselves not careful of their flock, if they lay it not up till Sunday, and bestow it amongst them in their next preachment. Or, if they light upon some difficult and obscure notion, which their curiosity inclines them to be better acquainted with, how useless soever, nothing so frequent as for them for a month or two months together, to tear and tumble this doctrine, and the poor people once a week shall come to gaze upon them by the hour, until they preach themselves, as they think, into a right understanding.

Those that are inclinable to make these useless speeches to the people, they do it for the most part, upon one of these two considerations: either out of simple fantastic
C 6 glory,

glory, and a great studiousness of being wondered at ; as if getting into the pulpit were a kind of staging ; where nothing was to be considered, but how much the sermon takes, and how much stared at : or else they do this, to gain a respect and reverence from their people ; who, say they, are to be puzzled now and then, and carried into the clouds. For, if the minister's words be such as the constable uses, his matter plain and practical, such as come to the common market, he may pass possibly for an honest, well-meaning man, but by no means for any scholar : whereas if he springs forth now and then in high raptures towards the uppermost Heavens, dashing here and there an all-confounding word ; if he soars aloft in unintelligible huffs, preaches points deep and mystical, and delivers them as dark and fantastical ; this is the way, say they, of being accounted a most able and learned instructor.

Others there be, whose parts stand not so much towards tall words and lofty notions, but consist in scattering up and down, and besprinkling all their sermons with plenty of Greek and Latin. And because St. Paul, once or so was pleased to make use of a little heathen Greek ; and that only when he had occasion to discourse with some of the learned ones, that well understood him, therefore
must

must they needs bring in twenty poets and philosophers (if they can catch them) into an hour's talk : spreading themselves in abundance of Greek and Latin, to a company of farmers and shepherds. Neither will they rest there, but have at the Hebrew also ; not contenting themselves to tell the people in general, that they have skill in the text, and that the exposition they offer, agrees with the original, but must swagger also over their poor parishioners with the dreadful Hebrew itself, with their Ben Israel's, Ben Manasses's, and many more Bens that they are intimately acquainted with ; whereas there is nothing in the church, nor near it by a mile, that understands them, but God Almighty himself, whom it is supposed, they go not about to inform or satisfy.

This learned way of talking, though for the most part, it is done meerly out of ostentation, yet sometimes (which makes not the case much better) it is done in compliment and civility to the all-wise patron, or all-understanding justice of the peace, in the parish : who by the common farmers of the town, must be thought to understand the most intricate notions, and the most difficult languages. Now, what an admirable thing this is ? suppose there should be one or so in the whole church that understands somewhat

what besides English ; shall not I think that he understands that better ? must I out of courtship to his worship and understanding, and because perhaps I am to dine with him, prate abundance of such stuff, which I must needs know no body understands, or that will be the better for it, but himself, and perhaps scarce he ? this I say, because I certainly know several of that disposition, who, if they chance to have a man of any learning or understanding, more than the rest of the parish, preach wholly at him, and level most of their discourses at his supposed capacity, and the rest of the good people shall have only a handsome gaze or view of the parson. **As** if plain words, useful and intelligible instructions were not as good for an esquire, or one that is in commission from the king, as for him that holds the plough, or mends hedges.

Certainly he that considers the design of his office, and has a conscience answerable to that holy undertaking, must needs conceive himself engaged, not only to mind this or that accomplished or well-dress'd person, but must have an universal care and regard of all his parish. And as he must think himself bound not only to visit down beds, and filken curtains, but also flocks and straw, if there be need ; so ought his
care

care to be as large to instruct the poor, the weak and despicable part of his parish, as those that sit in the best pews. He that does otherwise, thinks not at all of a man's soul, but only accommodates himself to fine cloaths, an abundance of ribbons, and the highest seat in the church: not thinking, that it will be as much to his reward in the next world, by sober advice, care and instruction, to have saved one that takes collection, as him that is able to relieve half the town. It is very plain, that neither our Saviour, when he was upon earth, and taught the world, made any such distinction in his discourses: what more intelligible to all mankind, than his sermon upon the mount? neither did the apostles think of any such way; I wonder whom they take for a pattern? I will suppose once again, that the design of these persons, is to gain glory? and I will ask them; can there be any greater in the world than doing general good; to omit future reward: was it not always esteemed of all, that correcting evil practices, reducing people that lived amiss, was much better than making a high rant about a shuttle-cock, and talking tara-tan-taro about a feather: or, if they would be only admired, then would I gladly have them consider what a thing, a delicate kind
of

of admiration is likely to be, produced by that which is not at all understood? certainly, that man that has a design of building up to himself real fame in good earnest, by things well laid and spoken, has ways to effect it, is not by talking staringly, and casting a mist before the people's eyes, but by offering such things by which he may be esteemed with knowledge and understanding.

Thus far concerning hard words, high notions, and unprofitable quotations out of learned languages. I shall now consider such things as are ridiculous, that serve for chimney and market talk, after the sermon be done; and that do cause more immediately the preacher to be scorned and undervalued. I have no reason, Sir, to go about to determine what style or method is best for the improvement and advantage of all people: for I question not but there has been as many several sorts of preachers, as orators, and, though very different, yet useful and commendable in their kind. Tully takes very deservedly with many, Seneca with others, and Cato, no question, said things wisely and well. So doubtless the same place of scripture may by several be variously considered; and although their method and style be altogether different, yet they

they may all speak all things very convenient for the people to know, and be advised of. But yet certainly what is most undoubtedly useless and empty, or what is judged absolutely ridiculous, not by this or that curious or squeamish auditor, but by every man in the corporation, that understands but plain English and common sense, ought to be avoided. For all people are naturally born with such a judgment of true and allowable rhetoric, that is, of what is decorous and convenient to be spoken, that whatever is grossly otherwise, is usually ungrateful, not only to the wise and skilful part of the congregation, but shall seem also ridiculous to unlearned tradesmen, and their young apprentices. Amongst which, may be chiefly reckoned these following, harsh metaphors, childish similitudes, and ill-applied tales.

The first main thing, I say, that makes many sermons so ridiculous, and the preachers of them so much disparaged and undervalued, is an inconsiderate use of frightful metaphors ; which making such a remarkable impression upon the ears, and leaving such a jarring twang behind them, are oft times remembered to the discredit of the minister, as long as he continues in the parish. I have heard the very children in the streets,

streets, and the little boys close about the fire, refresh themselves strangely, but with the repetition of a few of those far-fetched and odd-sounding expressions: Tully therefore and Cæsar, the two greatest masters of Roman eloquence, were very wary and sparing of that sort of rhetoric: we may read many a page in their works, before we meet with any of those bears; and if you do light upon one or so, it shall not make your hair stand right up, or put you into a fit of convulsion: but it shall be so soft, significant and familiar, as if it were made for the very purpose. But as for the common sort of people that are addicted to this way of expression in their discourses, away presently to both the Indies, rake heaven and earth, down to the bottom of the sea, then tumble over all arts and sciences, ransack all shops and warehouses, spare neither camp nor city, but that they will have them. So fond are such deceived ones of these same gay words, that they count all discourses empty, dull and cloudy, unless bespangled with these glitterings. Nay, so injudicious and impudent together, will they sometimes be, that the Almighty himself is often in danger of being dishonoured by these indiscreet and horrid metaphor-mongers: and when they thus blaspheme the God of Heaven,

ven,

ven, by such unhallowed expressions, to make amends, they put you in, as it were forsooth, or as I may so say; that is, they will make bold to speak what they please concerning God himself, rather than omit what they judge, though never so false, to be witty: and then, they come in hobbling with their lame submission, and with their reverence be it spoken. As if it were not much better, to leave out what they foresee is likely to be interpreted for blasphemy, or at least great extravagancy, than to utter that, for which their own reason and conscience tells them, they are bound to lay in before-hand an excuse.

To which may be further subjoined, that metaphors, though very apt and allowable, are intelligible but to some sorts of men, of this or that kind of life, of this or that profession: for example, perhaps one gentleman's metaphorical knack of preaching comes of the sea, and then we shall hear of nothing but star-board and lar-board, of stems, sterns and fore-castles, and such like salt water language: so that one had need to take a voyage to Smyrna or Aleppo, and very warily attend to all the sailors terms, before I shall in the least understand my teacher. Now, although such a sermon may possibly do some good in a coast town,

town, yet upward into the country, in an inland parish, it would do no more than Syrian, or Arabic. Another, he falls a fighting with his text, and makes a pitched battle of it, dividing it into the right wing, and left wing, then he rears it, flanks it, intrenches it, storms it; then he musters all again, to see what word was lost or lamed in the skirmish, and so falling on again with fresh valour, he fights backward and forward, charges through and through, routs, kills, and takes, and then gentlemen, as you were. Now, to such of his parish as have been in the late wars, this is not very formidable; for they do but suppose themselves at Naseby, or Edge-hill, and they are not much scared at his doctrine; but as for others, who have not had such fighting opportunities, it is very lamentable to consider how shivering they sit, without understanding, 'till the battle be over. The like instance might be easily given of many more discourses, the metaphorical phrasing whereof, depending upon peculiar arts, customs, trades, and professions, makes them useful and intelligible, only to such who have been very well busied in such like employments.

Another thing, Sir, that brings great disrespect and mischief upon the clergy, and that

that differs not much from what went immediately before, is their packing their sermons so full of similitudes; which all the world know, carry with them but very small force of argument, unless there be an exact agreement with that which is compared, of which there is very seldom any sufficient care taken. Besides, those that are addicted to this slender way of discourse, for the most part, do so weaken and enfeeble their judgment, by contenting themselves to understand by colours, features and glimpses, that they perfectly omit all the more profitable searching into the nature and causes of things themselves. By which means it necessarily comes to pass, that what they undertake to prove and clear out to the congregation, must needs be so faintly done, and with such little force of argument, that the conviction or persuasion, will last no longer in the parishioners minds, than the warmth of those similitudes shall glow in their fancies. So that he who has either been instructed in some part of his duty, or excited to the performance of the same, not by any judicious dependance of things, and lasting reason, but by such faint and toyish evidence; his understanding upon all occasions will be as apt to be misled as ever, and his

his affections as troublesome, and unmanageable.

But they are not so unserviceable as usually they are ridiculous; for people of the weakest parts are most commonly over-born with these fooleries; which, together with the great difficulty of their being prudently managed, must needs occasion them for the most part to be very trifling and childish, especially if we consider the choiceness of the authors out of which they are furnished. There is the never to be commended enough Lycosthenes; there is also the admirable piece, called *The Second Part of Wits Common-wealth* (I pray mind it, it is the second part, not the first) and there is besides, a book wholly consisting of similitudes, applied and ready fitted to most preaching subjects, for the help of young beginners, who sometimes will not make them hit handsomely. 'Tis very well known, that such as are possessed with admiration of such eloquence, think that they are mightily encouraged in their way by the scripture itself: For, say they, did not our Blessed Saviour himself, use many metaphors, and many parables? and did not his disciples, following his so excellent an example, do the like, and is not this, not only warrant enough, but near upon a command to us

so for to do? If you please therefore we will see what our Saviour does in this case. In St. Matthew he tells his Disciples, that they *are the salt of the earth*, that they *are the light of the world*; that they *are a city on an hill*: Furthermore he tells his Apostles, that *he sends them forth as sheep in the midst of wolves*, and bids them therefore *be as wise as serpents, and harmless as doves*. Now, are not all these things plain and familiar, even almost to children themselves, that can but taste and see; and to men of the lowest education, and meanest capacities?

I shall not here insist upon those special and admirable reasons, for which our Saviour made use of so many parables; only thus much is needful to be said, namely, that they are very much mistaken, that from hence think themselves tolerated, to turn all the world into frivolous and abominable similitudes. As for our Saviour, when he spoke a parable, he was pleased to go no further than the fields, the sea-shore, a garden, a vine-yard, or the like; which are things without the knowledge whereof, scarce any man can be supposed to live in this world. But as for our metaphorical and similitude-men of the pulpit, these things to them are too still and languid, they do not rattle and rumble; these lie too near
home

home, and within vulgar ken. There is little on this side the moon that will content them ; up presently to the Primum-mobile, and the trepidation of the firmament ; dive into the bowels and hid treasures of the earth ; dispatch forthwith for Peru or Jamaica ; a town-bred or country-bred similitude is worth nothing ! *'Tis reported of a tree, growing on the bank of Euphrates, the great river Euphrates, that it brings forth an apple, to the eye very fair and tempting, but inwardly it is filled with nothing but useless and deceitful dust ; even so, dust we are, and to dust we must all go.* Now, what a lucky discovery was this, that a man's body should be so exactly like an apple ? And I will assure you that this was not thought on 'till within these few years, and I am afraid too, that he had a kind of a hint of this from another, who had formerly found out that a man's soul was like an oyster ; for, says he, in his prayer, *Our souls are constantly gapeing after thee, O Lord, yea, verily our souls do gape, even as an oyster gapeth.* It seems pretty hard, at first sight, to bring into a sermon all the circles of the globe, and all the frightful terms of Astronomy. But I'll assure you, Sir, it is to be done, because it has been ; but not by every bungler and text-divider, but by a man of great cunning

cunning and experience. There is a place in the prophet Malachi, where it will do very neatly, and that is, chap. iv. ver. 2. *But unto you that fear my name, shall the sun of righteousness arise, with healing in his wings.* From which words, in the first place, it plainly appears, that our Saviour passed through all the twelve signs of the Zodiac; and more than that too, all proved by very apt and familiar places of scripture. First then, our Saviour was in Aries; or else what means that of the Psalmist? *The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs.* And again, that in the second of the Kings, chap. iii. ver. 4. *And Mesha king of Moab was a sheep-master, and rendered unto the King of Israel an hundred thousand lambs: and what follows? and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool.* Mind it, it was the king of Israel. In like manner was he in Taurus, Psal. xxii ver. 12. *Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.* They were not ordinary bulls; they were compassing bulls, they were besetting bulls, they were strong Bashan bulls. What need I speak of Gemini? Surely, you cannot but remember Jacob and Esau, Gen. xxv, 24. *And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold there were twins in her womb.* Or of Cancer? when as the Psalmist says so plain-

ly: *What ailed thee, O thou Sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan that thou wast driven back?* Nothing more plain, it were as easy to shew the like in all the rest of the signs; but instead of that, I shall rather chuse to make this one practical observation: That the mercy of God to mankind in sending his Son into the world, was a very signal mercy; it was zodiacal mercy. I say it was truly zodiacal, for Christ keeps within the tropics; he goes not out of the pale of the church. But yet he is not always at the same distance from a believer; sometimes he withdraws himself into the apogæum of doubt, sorrow, and despair, but then he comes again into the perigæum of joy, content, and assurance: But as for heathens, and unbelievers, they are all arctic, and antarctic reprobates. Now when such stuff as this (as sometimes it is) is vented in a poor parish, where people can scarce tell what day of the month it is by the almanack, how seasonable and favourable it is likely to be? It seems also not very easy, for a man in his sermon, to learn his parishioners how to dissolve gold; of what, and how the stuff is made. Now, to ring the bells, and call the people on purpose together, would be but a blunt business; but to do it neatly, and when no body looked for

for it, that's the rarity and art of it. Suppose then, that he takes for his text that of St. Matthew, *Repent ye, for the kingdom of God is at hand.* Now, tell me, Sir, do you not perceive the gold to be in a dismal fear, to curl and quiver at the first reading of these words? It must come in thus. The blots and blurs of your sins, must be taken out by the aqua-fortis of your tears: to which aqua-fortis, if you put a fifth part of sal-armoniac, and set them in a gentle heat, it makes aqua-regia, which dissolves gold. And now 'tis out. Wonderful are the things that are to be done by the help of metaphors and similitudes! And I'll undertake, that with a little more pains and consideration, out of the very same words, he could have taught the people how to make custards, and marmalade, or to stew prunes. But pray, why the aqua-fortis of tears? For, if it so falls out, that there should chance to be neither apothecary nor druggist at church, there is an excellent jest wholly lost. Now, had he been so considerate, as to have laid his wit in some common and intelligible material, for example, had he said that the blots of sin will be easily taken out by the soap of sorrow, and the fuller's-earth of contrition; then possibly the parson and the people might all have ad-

admired one another. For there is many a good wife, that understands very well all the intrigues of pepper, salt, and vinegar, who knows not any thing of the all-powerfulness of aqua-fortis, how that it is such a spot-removing liquor. I cannot but consider with what understanding the people sighed and cried, when the minister made for them this metaphysical confession. *Omnipotent all; thou art only: because thou art all, and because thou only art: As for us, we are not, but we seem to be, and only seem to be; because we are not: for we are but mites of entity, and crumbs of something; and so on.* As if a company of country people were bound to understand Suarez, and all the school-divines.

And as some are very high and learned in their attempts; so others there be who are of somewhat too mean and dirty imaginations. Such was he, who goes by the name of parson Slip-stocking: who preaching about the grace and assistance of God, and that of ourselves we are able to do nothing; advised his beloved to take him in this plain similitude. A father calls his child to him, saying, child pull off this stocking: The child mightily joyful, that it should pull off father's stocking, takes hold of the stocking, and tuggs, and pulls, and sweats, but

to no purpose ; for stocking stirs not, for it is but a child that pulls : Then the father bids the child to rest a little, and try again ; so then the child sets on again, tuggs again, and pulls again, and sweats again, but no stocking comes ; for child is but child still : Then at last, the father taking pity upon his child, puts his hand behind, and slips down the stocking, and off comes the stocking : Then how does the child rejoice ? for child hath pulled off father's stocking. Alas, poor child ! it was not child's strength, it was not child's sweating, that got off the stocking, but it was the father's hand behind that slipped down the stocking. Even so——Not much unlike to this was he, that preaching about the sacrament and faith, makes Christ a shop-keeper ; telling you, that Christ is a treasury of all wares and commodities. And therefore, opening his wide throat, cries aloud, Good people, what do you lack ? what do you buy ? will you buy any balm of Gilead, any eye-salve, any myrrh, aloes or cassia ? Shall I fit you with a robe of righteousness, or with a white garment ? See here ! what is it you want ? Here's a very choice armory : shall I shew you an helmet of salvation, a shield or a breast-plate of faith ? will you please to walk in

and see some precious stones? a jasper, a sapphire, or a calcedonius? Speak, what do you buy? Now, for my part, I must needs say, and I much fancy I speak the mind of thousands, that it had been much better, for such an imprudent and ridiculous bawler as this, to have been condemned to have cryed oysters, or brooms, than to discredit after this unsanctified rate, his profession, and our religion.

It would be an endless thing, Sir, to count up to you all the follies, for an hundred years last past, that have been preached and printed of this kind. But yet, I cannot omit that of the famous divine, in his time, who advising the people in days of danger to run unto the Lord, tells them, *that they cannot go to the Lord, much less run without feet: There be therefore two feet to run to the Lord, faith and prayer: 'Tis plain that faith is a foot, for by faith we stand, 2 cor. i. 24. therefore by faith we must run to the Lord who is faithful. The second is prayer, a spiritual leg to bear us thither: Now, that prayer is a spiritual leg, appears from several places of scripture; as from that of Jonah, speaking of coming, chap. ii. ver. 7. And my prayer came unto thy holy temple: And likewise from that of the apostle, who says, Heb. iv. ver. 16. Let us therefore go unto*
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the throne of grace: Both intimating that prayer is the spiritual leg, there being no coming nor going to the Lord without the leg of prayer. He further adds, Now, that these feet may be able to bear us thither, we must put on the hose of faith; for the apostle says, our feet must be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. The truth of it is, the author is somewhat obscure: For, at first, faith was a foot; by and by it is a hose; and at last it proves a shoe. If he had pleased, he could have made it any thing.

Neither can I let pass that of a later author: who telling us, *It is goodness by which we must ascend to Heaven*; and that goodness is the milky-way to Jupiter's palace; could not rest here, but must tell us further, that to strengthen us in our journey, we must not take morning milk, but morning meditations; fearing, I suppose, lest some people should mistake, and think to go to heaven by eating now and then a mess of morning milk, because the way was milky.

Neither ought that to be omitted, not long since printed, upon those words of St. John, *These things I write unto you, that you sin not*. The observation is, That it is the purpose of the scripture to drive men from Sin. *These scriptures contain doctrines, precepts, promises, threatenings and Histories*. Now,

says he, *take these five smooth stones, and put them into the scrip of the heart, and throw them with the sling of faith, by the hand of a strong resolution, against the forehead of sin, and we shall see it like Goliath, fall before us.*

But I shall not trouble you any further upon this subject; but, if you have a mind to hear any more of this stuff, I shall refer you to the learned and judicious author of the friendly debates; who particularly has at large discovered the intolerable fooleries of this way of talking. I shall only add thus much; that such as go about to fetch blood into their pale and lean discourses, by the help of their brisk and sparkling similitudes, ought well to consider whether their similitudes be true. I am confident, Sir, you have heard it many and many a time (or if need be I can shew you it in a book) that when the preacher happens to talk, how that the things here below will not satisfy the mind of man; then comes in the *round world, which cannot fill the triangular heart of man*: Whereas every butcher knows, that the heart is no more triangular than an ordinary pear, or a child's top: but because triangular is a hard word, and perhaps a jest, therefore people have stolen it one from another, these two or three hundred years; and for ought I know much

much longer ; for I cannot direct to the first inventor of the fancy.

In like manner they are to consider, what things either in the heaven, or belonging to the earth, have been found out by experience to contradict what has been formerly allowed of. Thus, because some antient astronomers had observed, that both the distances, as well as the revolutions of the planets, were in some proportion or harmony one to another ; therefore people that abounded more with imagination than skill, presently fancied the Moon, Mercury and Venus to be a kind of violins or trebles to Jupiter or Saturn ; and that the Sun and Mars supplied the room of tenors ; the primum mobile running division all the time. So that one could scarce hear a sermon, but they must give you a touch of the harmony of the spheres. Thus, Sir, you shall have them take that of St. Paul, about faith, hope and charity ; and instead of a sober instructing the people in those eminent and excellent graces, they shall only ring you over a few changes upon the three words : crying, faith, hope and charity : hope, faith and charity ; and so on. And when they have done their peal, they shall tell you, *that this is much better than the harmony of the spheres.*

At other times I have heard a long chiming only between two words; as suppose divinity and philosophy, or revelation and reason: setting forth with revelation first: *Revelation is the sun, reason is but the moon. Revelation is a lady, reason an handmaid. Revelation is the esquire, reason the page. Revelation is manna, reason is but an acorn. Revelation a wedge of gold, reason a small piece of silver.* Then by and by reason gets in and leads it away, *Reason indeed is very good, but revelation is much better. Reason is counsellor, but revelation is the law-giver. Reason is a candle, but revelation is the snuffer.* Certainly those people are possessed with a very great degree of dulness, who living under the means of such enlightening preaching should not be mightily settled in the right notion, and true bounds of faith and reason.

Not less ably, methought, was the difference between the old covenant and new, lately determined, *The old covenant was of works, the new covenant of faith. The old covenant was by Moses, the new by Christ. The old was heretofore, the new afterwards. The old was first, the new was second. Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.* And so the business was fundamentally done.

I shall say no more upon this subject but
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this one thing, which relates to what was said a little before : he that has got a set of similitudes, calculated according to the old philosophy, and Ptolemy's system of the world, must burn his common-place-book, and go a gleaning for new ones : It being much more genteel and warrantable, to take a similitude from the man in the moon, than from solid orbs : for though few people do absolutely believe that there is any such eminent person there, yet the thing is possible, whereas the other is not.

I have now done, Sir, with that imprudent way of speaking by metaphor and similitude. There be many other things commonly spoken out of the pulpit, that are much to the disadvantage and discredit of the clergy, that ought also to be briefly hinted. And that I may the better light upon them, I shall observe their common method of preaching.

Before the text be divided, a preface is to be made : And it is a great chance, if, first of all, the minister does not make his text to be like something or other. For example : One he tells you, *And now (methinks) my text, like an ingenious picture, looks upon all here present ; in which both nobles and people may behold their sin and danger represented.* This was a text out of Hosea. Now,
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had it been out of any other place of the Bible, the gentleman was sufficiently resolved, to make it like an ingenious picture. Another taking (perhaps) the very same words, says, *I might compare my text to the mountain of Bether, where the Lord disports himself like a young hart, or a pleasant roe amongst the spices.* Another man's text is like *the rod of Moses, to divide the waves of sorrow; or, like the mantle of Elijah, to restrain the swelling floods of grief.* Another gets to his text thus, *As Solomon went up six steps to come to the great throne of ivory; so must I ascend six degrees to come to the high top-meaning of my text.* Another thus, *As Deborah arose and went along with Barak to Kadesh; so, if you will go along with him, and call in at the third verse of this chapter, he will show you the meaning of his text.*

Another fancies his text to be extraordinary like an orchard of pomgranates; or like St. Matthew, fitting at the receipt of custom; or like the dove that Noah sent out of the ark. I believe there are above forty places of scripture that have been like Rachel and Leah; and there is one in Genesis, as I well remember, that is like a pair of compasses straddling; and if I be not much mistaken, there is one somewhere

where else, that is like a man going to Jericho.

Now, Sir, having thus made the way to the text, as smooth and plain as any thing; with a preface perhaps from Adam; though his business lie at the other end of the bible: In the next place he comes to divide the text.

—*Hic Labor, hoc Opus.*

Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum.

Silvestrem tenui.——

Now off come the gloves, and the hands being well chafed, he shrinks up his shoulders, and stretches forth himself as if he were going to cleave a bullock's head, or rive the body of an oak. But we must observe, that there is a great difference of texts. For all texts come not afunder alike: for sometimes the words naturally fall afunder; sometimes they drop afunder; sometimes they melt; sometimes they untwist; and there are some words so willing to be parted, that they divide themselves to the great ease and rejoicing of the minister. But if they will not easily come in pieces, then he falls to hacking and hewing, as if he would make all fly into shivers. The truth of it is, I have known now and then some

some knotty texts that have been divided seven or eight times over, before they could make them split handsomely, according to their mind.

But then comes the joy of joys, when the parts jingle, or begin with the same letter; and especially if in Latin. O how it tickled the divider, when he had got his text into two these excellent branches; *Accusativo vera*; *Comminatio severa*. *A charge full of verity*; *a discharge full of severity*. And I'll warrant you that did not please a little, *duplex miraculum*; *miraculum in modo*, and *miraculum in nodo*. But the luckiest that I have met withal, both for wit, and keeping the letter, is upon those words of St. Matthew, chap. xii. ver. 43, 44, 45. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none: Then he saith, I will return, &c.* In which words all these strange things were found out. First, there was a captain and a castle. Do you see, Sir, the same letter? Then there was an ingress, and egress; and a re-refs or re-ingress. Then there was unrooting and unresting. Then there was number and name, manner and measure, trouble and trial, resolution and revolution, assaults and assassination, voidness and vacuity. This was done at the same time by the same man: But,

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to confess the truth of it, it was a good long text, and so he had the greater advantage.

But for a short text, that certainly was the greatest break that ever was; which was occasioned from those words of St. Luke, chap. xxiii. ver 28. *Weep not for me, weep for yourselves*, or as some read it, *but weep for yourselves*. It is a plain case, Sir, here are but eight words, and the business was so cunningly ordered that there sprung out eight parts: *Here are*, says the Doctor, *eight words, and eight parts*. 1. *Weep not*. 2. *But weep*. 3. *Weep not, but weep*. 4. *Weep for me*. 5. *For yourselves*. 6. *For me, for yourselves*. 7. *Weep not for me*. 8. *But weep for yourselves*. That is to say, *North, North and by East, North North East, North East and by North, North East, North East and by East, East North East, East and by North, East*.—Now, it seems not very easy to determine which has obliged the world, he that found out the compass, or he that divided the forementioned text: But I suppose the cracks will go generally upon the Doctor's side; by reason what he did, was done by undoubted art, and absolute industry; but as for the other, the common report is, that it was found out by meer foolish fortune. Well, let it go how it will,

will, questionless they will be both famous in their way, and honourably mentioned to posterity.

Neither ought he to be altogether slighted who taking that of Gen. chap. xlviii. ver. 2. for his text, viz. *And one told Jacob, and said, Behold thy son Joseph cometh unto thee*: He presently perceived and made it out to the people, that his text was a spiritual dial. For, says he, here be in my text twelve words, which do plainly represent the twelve hours. Twelve words: *And one told Jacob, and said, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee. And here is, besides Behold, which is the hand of the dial, that turns and points at every word in the text. And one told Jacob, and said, Behold thy son Joseph cometh unto thee. For it is not said, Behold Jacob, or Behold Joseph: But it is, and one told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee. That is to say, Behold and. Behold one. Behold told. Behold Jacob. Again Behold and. Behold said. (and also) Behold behold, &c. which is the reason that the word Behold is placed in the middle of the other twelve words, indifferently pointing at each word.*

Now, as it needs must be one of the clock, before it can be two or three; so I shall handle the word *And* the first word in the text, before I meddle with the following. *And one told Jacob: This word And is but a particle, and a*

small one: but small things are not to be despised: St. Matth. chap. xviii. ver. 10. Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones. For this And is as the tacks and loops amongst the curtains of the tabernacle. The tacks put into the loop did couple the curtains of the tent, and sew the tent together: So this particle And being put into the loops of the words immediately before the text, does couple the text to the foregoing verse, and sews them close together.

I shall not trouble you, Sir, with the rest, being much after this witty rate, and to as much purpose. But we will go on if you please Sir, to the cunning observations, doctrines, and inferences that are commonly made and raised from places of scripture.

One he takes that for his text, *Psal. lxxviii. ver. 3. But let the righteous be glad.* From whence he raiseth this doctrine, *That there is a spirit of singularity in the saints of God. But let the righteous.* A doctrine, I'll warrant him, of his own raising; it being not very easy for any body to prevent him.

Another, he takes that of *Isa. chap. xli. ver. 14, 15. Fear not thou worm Jacob, &c. thou shalt thresh the mountains*—Whence he observes, that the worm Jacob was a threshing-worm.

Another that of *Gen. chap. xliv. ver. 1.*

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And he commanded the steward of the house, saying, Fill the mens sacks with food, as much as they can carry: And makes his note from the words: that great sacks, and many sacks, will hold more than few sacks, and little ones. For look, says he, how they came prepared with sacks and beasts, so they were sent back with corn: the greater and the more sacks they had prepared, the more corn they carry away; if they had prepared but small sacks, and a few, they had carried away the less. Verily and extraordinarily true.

Another, he falls upon that of Isa. chap. lviii. ver. 5. *Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush. The observation is, that repentance for an hour, or a day, is not worth a bulrush. And there, I think he hit the business.*

But of these, Sir, I can shew you a whole book-full, in a treatise called *Flames and Discoveries*: consisting of very notable and extraordinary things, which the inquisitive author had privately observed, and discovered, upon reading the Evangelists. As for example: Upon reading that of St. John, chap. ii. ver. 15. *And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple:* This prying divine makes these discoveries. *I discover, says he, in the first place,*

place, that in the church or temple, a scourge may be made : and when he had made a scourge. Secondly, that it may be made use on : He drove them all out of the temple. And it was a great chance, that he had not discovered a third thing, and that is, that the scourge was made before it was made use of. Upon Matth. chap. iv. ver. 25. And there followed him great multitudes of people, from Galilee. I discover, says he, when Jesus prevails with us, we shall soon leave our Galilees. I discover also, says he, a great miracle, viz. That the way after Jesus being strait, that such a multitude should follow him. Matth. chap. v. ver. 1. And seeing the multitude, he went up into a mountain : Upon this he discovers several very remarkable things : First, he discovers, that Christ went from the multitude. Secondly, That it is safe taking warning at our eyes ; for seeing the multitude he went up. Thirdly, It is not fit to be always upon the plains and flats with the multitude ; but if we be risen with Christ, to seek those things that are above. He discovers also very strange things from the latter part of the verse : And when he was set, his disciples came unto him. 1 Christ is not always in motion : and when he was set. 2 He walks not on the mountain, but sits, and when he was set. From whence also, in the third place, he advises people, That when
they

they are teaching, they should not move too much, for that is to be carried to and fro, with every wind of doctrine: Now, certainly never was this place of scripture more seasonably brought in. Now, Sir, if you be for a very short and witty discovery, let it be upon that of St. Matth. chap. vi. ver. 27. Which of you by taking thought, can add one cubit more unto his stature? The discovery is this, That whilst the disciples were taking thought for a cubit, Christ takes them down a cubit lower. Notable also are two discoveries, made upon St. Matth. chap. viii. ver. 1. When he came down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. 1. That Christ went down as well as went up; when he came down from the mountain. 2. That the multitude did not go hail fellow well met with him, nor before him: For, great multitudes followed him. I love with all my heart, when people can prove what they say: For there be many that will talk of their discoveries and spiritual observations, and when all comes to all, they are nothing but pitiful guesses, and slender conjectures. In like manner that was no contemptible discovery that was made upon St. Matth. chap. viii. ver 19. And a certain scribe came and said, Master, I will follow thee wheresoever thou goest. A [thou] shall be followed more than a [that] I will follow

low thee wheresoever thou goest. And in my opinion, that was not altogether amiss, upon St. Matth. chap. xi. ver. 2. *Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples.* Some also possibly may not dislike that upon St. Luke, chap. xii. ver. 35. *Let your loins be girded. I discover,* says he, *there must be a holy girding and trussing up for heaven.* But I shall end all with that very politic one, that he makes upon St. Matth. chap. xii. ver. 47. *Then one said unto him, Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.* But he answered and said, *Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?* I discover now, says he, *that Jesus is upon business.* Doubtless, this was one of the greatest discoverers of hidden mysteries, and one of the greatest pryers into spiritual secrets, that ever the world was owner of. It was very well that he happened upon the godly calling, and no secular employment; or else, in good truth, down had they all gone turk, pope, and emperor; for he would have discovered them one way or other, every man.

Not much unlike to these wonderful discoverers are they, who chusing to preach upon some point in divinity, shall purpose-ly avoid all such plain texts, as might give them

them very just occasion to discourse upon their intended subject, and shall pitch upon some other places of scripture, which no creature in the world but themselves did ever imagine that which they offer to be therein designed. My meaning, Sir, is this : suppose you have a mind to make a sermon concerning episcopacy, (as in the late times there was several occasions for it) you must by no means take any place of scripture that proves or favours that kind of ecclesiastical government : for then the plot will be discovered, and the people will say to themselves, we know where to find you, you intend to preach about episcopacy. But you must take that of the Acts, chap. xvi. ver. 30. *Sirs, What must I do to be saved?* An absolute place for episcopacy, that all former divines had idly overlooked : for, Sirs, being in the Greek *Κύριος*, which is to say, in true and strict translation : *Lords, what more plain than that of old, episcopacy was not only the acknowledged government ; but that bishops were formerly peers of the realm, and so ought to sit in the house of lords?* Or, suppose that you have a mind to commend to your people kingly government ; you must not take any place that is plainly to the purpose, but that of the evangelist, *Seek first the kingdom of God.* From which words the doctrine

doctrine will plainly be, *That monarchy or kingly government is most according to the mind of God.* For it is not said, seek the parliament of God, the army of God, or the committee of safety of God; but it is, *Seek, the kingdom of God.* And who could expect less? Immediately after this the king came in, and the bishops were restored. Again, Sir, because I would willingly be understood, suppose you design to preach about election and reprobation: As for the eighth chapter to the Romans, that is too well known: But there is a little private place in the Psalms that will do the business as well, Psal. xc. ver. 19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.* The doctrine which naturally flows from the words, will be, *That amongst the multitude of thoughts. there is a great thought of election and reprobation.* And then away with the point according as the preacher is inclined. Or, suppose lastly, that you were not fully satisfied that pluralities were lawful or convenient: May I be so bold, Sir, I pray what text would you chuse to preach upon against non-residents? Certainly nothing ever was better picked than that of St. Matth. chap. i. ver. 2. *Abraham begat Isaac.* A clear place against non-residents: For had Abraham not resided,

ded, but discontinued from Sarah his wife, he could never have begot Isaac.

But it is high time, Sir, to make an end of their preaching, lest you be as much tired with the repetition of it, as the people were little benefited when they heard it: I shall only mind you, Sir, of one thing more and that is, the ridiculous, senseless and unintended use, which many of them make of concordances. I shall give you but one instance of it, although I could furnish you with an hundred printed ones. The text, Sir, is this, Galat. chap. vi. ver. 15. *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but a new creature.* Now, all the world know the meaning of this to be, that let a man be of what nation he will, Jew or Gentile, if he amends his life, and walks according to the gospel, he shall be accepted with God. But this is not the way that pleases them: They must bring into their sermon, to no purpose at all, a vast heap of places of scripture (which the concordance will furnish them with) where the word new is mentioned: and the observation must be, *That God is for new things; God is for a new creature.* St. John chap. xix. ver. 41. *Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet*

yet laid; there laid they Jesus. And again, St. Mark chap. xvi. ver. 17. Christ tells his disciples, that they that are true believers shall cast out devils, and speak with new tongues. And likewise the prophet teaches us, Isa. chap. xlii. ver. 10. *Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise unto the end of the earth.* Whence it is plain, that Christ is not for old things; he is not for an old sepulchre; he is not for old tongues; he is not for an old song; he is not for an old creature; Christ is for the new creature: *Circumcision and uncircumcision availeth nothing, but the new creature.* And what do we read concerning Sampson, Judg. xv. ver. 15. Is it not, that he slew a thousand of the Philistines with one new jaw-bone? An old one might have killed its tens, its twenties, its hundreds; but it must be a new jaw-bone that is able to kill a thousand. God is for the new creature.

But may not some say, is God altogether for new things? How comes it about then that the prophet says, Isa. chap. i. ver. 13, 14. *Bring no more vain oblations, &c. your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth?* And again, what means that, Deut. chap. xxxii. ver. 17, 19. *They sacrificed unto devils; and to new gods, whom they knew not; to new gods that came newly up: And when the*

Lord saw it, he abhorred them? To which I answer: that God indeed is not for new moons, nor for new gods; but, excepting moons and gods he is for new things: God is for the new creature.

It is possible, Sir, that somebody besides yourself, may be so vain as to read this letter; and they may perhaps tell you, that there be no such silly and useles people as I have described; and if there be, there be not above two or three in a county; or should there be more, it is no such complaining matter, seeing that the same happens in other professions, in law or phyfic: In both which there be many a contemptible creature.

Such therefore as these may be pleased to know, that if there had been need, I could have told them either the book and very page almost of all that has been spoken about preaching; or else the when and where, and the person that preached it.

As to the second, *viz.* That the clergy are all mightily furnished with learning and prudence, except ten, twenty, or so; I shall not say any thing myself, because a very great scholar of our nation shall speak for me, who tells us, That such preaching as is usual, is a hindrance of salvation, rather than the means to it. And what he intends by usual, I shall not here go about to explain.

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As to the last, I shall also in short, answer, that if the advancement of true religion, and the eternal salvation of a man, were no more considerable than the health of the body, and the security of his estate, we need not be more solicitous about the learning and prudence of the clergy than of the lawyers and physicians: But being, we believe it to be otherwise, surely we ought to be more concerned for the reputation and success of the one than of the other.

I come now, Sir, to the second part that was designed, *viz.* the poverty of some of the clergy: By whose mean condition, their sacred profession is much disparaged, and their doctrine undervalued.

What large provisions of old, God was pleased to make for the priesthood, and upon what reasons, is easily seen to any one that looks but into the Bible. The Levites it is true, were left out in the division of the inheritance; not to their loss, but to their great temporal advantage; For whereas, had they been common sharers with the rest, a twelfth part only would have been their just allowance, God was pleased to settle upon them a tenth: And that without any trouble or charge of tillage: Which made their portion much more considerable than the rest.

And as this provision was very bountiful, so the reasons no question, were very divine and substantial; which seem chiefly to be these two.

First, that the priesthood might be altogether at leisure for the service of God, and that they of that holy order might not be distracted with the cares of the world, and interrupted by every neighbour's horse or cow, that breaks their hedges or shackles their corn: But that living a kind of spiritual life, and being removed a little from all worldly affairs, they might always be fit to receive holy inspirations, and always ready to search out the mind of God, and to advise and direct the people therein. Not as if this divine exemption of them from the common troubles and cares of this life, was intended as an opportunity of luxury and laziness, for certainly there is a labour besides digging: And there is a true carefulness without following the plough, and looking after their cattle. And such was the employment of those holy men of old: their care and business was to please God, and to charge themselves with the welfare of all his people: Which thing he that does with a good and satisfied conscience, I'll assure you, he has a task upon him, much beyond them that have
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For their care, their hundreds of oxen, and five hundreds of sheep.

Another reason that this large allowance was made to the priests, was, that they might be enabled to relieve the poor, to entertain strangers, and thereby to encourage people in the ways of godliness: For they being in a peculiar manner the servants of God, God was pleased to entrust in their hands a portion more than ordinary of the good things of the land, as the safest store-house and treasury for such as were in need. That in all ages therefore, there should be a continued tolerable maintainance for the clergy; the same reasons, as well as many others, make us think to be very necessary. Unless they will count money and victuals to be only types and shadows, and so to cease with the ceremonial law.

For where the minister is pinched, as to the tolerable conveniencies of this life, the chief of his care and time must be spent not in an impertinent considering what texts of scripture will be most useful for his parish, what instructions most seasonable, and what authors best to be consulted: But the chief of his thoughts, and his main business must be to study how to live that week? where he shall have bread for his family: Whose sow has lately pigged? Whence will come the

next rejoycing goose, or the next cheerful basket of apples? How far to lammas, or offerings? When shall we have another christening and cakes, and who is likely to marry or die? These are very seasonable considerations, and worthy of a man's thoughts. For a family cannot be maintained by texts and contexts: And the child that lies crying in the cradle, will not be satisfied without a little milk, and perhaps sugar, though there be a small German system in the house.

But suppose he does get into a little hole over the oven, with a lock to it, called his study, towards the latter end of the week (for you must know, Sir, there are very few texts of scripture, that can be divided at soonest, before Friday night; and some there be that will never be divided but upon Sunday morning, and that not very early, but either a little before they go, or in going to church;) I say, suppose the gentleman gets thus into his study: one may very near guess, what is his first thought when he comes there, *viz* that the last kilderkin of drink is near departed; and that he has but one poor single groat in the house, and there is judgment and execution ready to come out against it, for milk and eggs. Now, Sir, can any man think that one thus racked, and tortured, can be seriously intent half an hour to contrive
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any thing that might be of real advantage to his people? Besides, perhaps that week he has met with some dismal crosses, and undoing misfortunes. There was a scurvy conditioned mole that broke into his pasture, and ploughed up the best part of his glebe: and a little after that, came a couple of spightful ill-favoured crows: and trampled down the little remaining grafs: Another day, having but four chickens, sweep comes the kite, and carries away the fattest and hopefullest of all the brood. Then after all this came the jackdaws and starlings, (idle birds that they are!) and they scattered and carried away from his thin thatched house, forty or fifty of the best straws. And to make him compleatly unhappy, after all these afflictions, another day, that he had a pair of breeches on, coming over a perverse stile, he suffered very much in carelessly lifting over his leg. Now, what parish can be so inconsiderate and unreasonable, as to look for any thing from one, whose fancy is thus checked, and whose understanding is thus ruffled and disordered. They may as soon expect comfort and consolation from him that lies racked with the gout and stone, as from a divine thus broken and shattered in his fortunes.

But we will grant, that he meets not with

any of these such frightful disasters, but that he goes into his study with a mind as calm as the evening: For all that, upon Sunday, we must be content even with what God shall please to send us. For as for books, he is (for want of money) so moderately furnished, that except it be a small Geneva Bible, so small, as it will not be desired to lie open of itself, together with a certain Concordance thereunto belonging; as also a book for all kind of Latin sentences, called Polyanthæa, with some exposition upon the catechism (a portion of which is to be got by heart, and to be put off for his own;) and perhaps Mr. Caryl upon Pineda, Mr. Dod upon the commandments, and Mr. Clark's lives of famous men, both in church and state; such as Mr. Carter of Norwich, that used to eat such abundance of pudding: Besides, I say, these, there is scarce any thing to be found but a budget of old stitched sermons, hung up behind the door, with a few broken girths, two or three yards of whipcord, and perhaps a saw and hammer, to prevent dilapidations. Now, what may not a divine do, though but of ordinary parts, and unhappy education, with such learned helps and assistances as these? No vice surely durst stand before him, and hereby affront him.

And furthermore, Sir, it is to be considered,

dered, that he that is but thus meanly provided for, it is not his only infelicity that he has neither, time, mind, nor books to improve himself for the inward benefit and satisfaction of his people, but also that he is not capable of doing that outward good amongst the needy, which is a great ornament to that holy profession, and a considerable advantage towards the having his doctrine believed and practised in a degenerate world. And that which augments the misery, whether he be able or not, it is expected from him. If there comes a brief to town, for the minister to cast in his mite, will not satisfy, unless he can create sixpence or a shilling to put into the box, for a stale to decoy in the rest of the parish : Nay, he that has but twenty or thirty pounds *per annum*, if he bids not up as high as the best in the parish in all acts of charity, he is counted carnal and earthly-minded, only because he durst not coin, and cannot work miracles. And let there come never so many beggars, half of these I'll secure you, shall presently enquire for the minister's house : For God, say they, certainly dwells there, and has laid up for us sufficient relief.

I know many of the laity are usually so extremely tender of the spiritual welfare of the clergy, that they are apt to wish them but

very small temporal good, lest their inward state should be in danger, (a thing they need not much fear, since that effectual humiliation of Henry the eighth.) For, say they, the great tithes, large glebes, good victuals and warm cloaths, do but puff up the priest, making him fat, foggy, and useless, and fill him with pride, vain-glory, and all kind of inward wickedness, and pernicious corruption. We see this plain, say they, in the whore of Babylon: To what a degree of luxury and intemperance (besides a great deal of false doctrine) have riches and honour raised up that strumpet: How does she strut it, and swagger it over all the world, terrifying princes, and despising kings and emperors? The clergy, if ever we would expect any edification from them, ought to be dieted and kept low, to be meek and humble, quiet, and stand in need of a pot of milk from their next neighbour, and always be very loth to ask for their very right, for fear of making any disturbance in the parish, or seeming to understand, or have any respect for this vile and outward world. Under the law indeed, in those old times of darkness and eating, the priests had their first and second dishes, their milk and honey, their manna and quails, their outward also and inward vestments; but now under the gospel,

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and in times of light and fasting, a much more sparing diet is fitter, and a single coat, though it be never so ancient and thin is fully sufficient. We must now look, say they (if we would be better for them) for a hardy and labouring clergy, that is mortified to a horse, and all such pampering vanities, and that can foot it five or six miles in the dirt, and preach until star-light for as many shillings; as also a sober and temperate clergy, that will not eat so much as the laity, but that the least pig, and the least sheaf, and the least of every thing, may satisfy their spiritualships. And besides: a money-re-nouncing clergy, that can abstain from seeing a penny a month together, unless it be when the collectors, and visitationers come. These are all gospel-dispensations, and great instances of patience, contentedness, and resignation of affections; to all the emtynesses and fooleries of this life.

But, cannot a clergyman chuse rather to lie upon feathers than an hurdle, but he must be idle, soft, and effeminate? May he not desire wholesome food, and fresh drink, unless he be a cheat, a hypocrite and an impostor? and must he needs be void of all grace, though he has a shilling in his purse after the rates be crossed? and full of pride and vanity, though his house stands not

upon crutches, and though his chimney is to be seen a foot above the thatch? Oh! how prettily and temperately may half a score children be maintained with almost twenty pounds per annum! What a handsome shift a poor ingenious and frugal divine will make, to take it by turns, and wear a cassock one year, and a pair of breeches another? What a becoming thing is it, for him that serves at the altar, to fill the dung-cart in dry weather, and to heat the oven, and pill hemp in wet? And what a pleasant sight is it, to see the man of God fetching up his single melancholy cow, from a small rib of land that is scarce to be found without a guide? Or to be seated upon a soft and well grinded pouch of meal? Or to be planted upon a pannier with a pair of geese, or turkies, bobbing out their heads from under his canonical coat, as you cannot but remember the man, Sir, that was thus accomplished? Or to find him raving about the yards, or keeping his chamber close, because the duck lately miscarried of an egg, or that the never-failing hen has unhappily forsaken her wonted nest?

And now, shall we think that such employments as these can any way consist with due reverence, or tolerable respect from a parish? And he speaks altogether at a venture.

ture, that either says that this is false, or at least it need not be so, notwithstanding the mean condition of some of the clergy. For let any one make it out to me, which way it is possible, that a man shall be able to maintain perhaps eight or ten in his family, with twenty or thirty pounds per annum, without a most intolerable dependance upon his parish, and without committing himself to such vileness, as will in all likelihood, render him contemptible to his people. Now, where the income is so pittifully small (which I'll assure you, is the portion of hundreds of the clergy of this nation) which way shall he manage it for the subsistence of himself, and his family? If he keeps the glebe in his own hand (which he may easily do, almost in the hollow of it) what increase can he expect from a couple of apple-trees, a brood of ducklings, a hempland, and as much pasture as is just able to summer a cow? And as for his tithes, he either rents them out to a lay-man, who will be very unwilling to be his tenant, unless he may be sure to save by the bargain at least a third part: Or else he compounds for them; and then as for his money, he shall have it when all the rest of the world be paid. But if he thinks fit to take his dues in kind, he then either demands his true and utmost right; and if so, it is a great.

great hazard if he be not counted a catterpillar, a muckworm, a very earthly-minded man, and too much fighted into this lower world, which was made, as many of the laity think, altogether for themselves: Or else he must tamely commit himself to that little dose of the creature, that shall be pleased to be proportioned out unto him; chusing rather to starve in peace and quietness, than to gain his right by noise and disturbance; The best of all these ways that a clergyman shall think fit for his preferment to be managed, where it is so small, are such, as will undoubtedly make him either to be hated and reviled, or else pittifully poor and disesteemed.

But has it not gone very hard in all ages with the men of God? Was not our Lord and Master, our great and high priest; and was not his fare low, and his life full of trouble? And was not the condition of most of his disciples very mean? Were not they notably pinched, and severely treated after him? And is it not the duty of every christian to imitate such holy patterns: but especially of the clergy, who are to be shining lights and visible examples, and therefore to be satisfied with a very little morsel, and to renounce ten times as much of the world as other people? And is not patience better than
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the great tithes, and contendness to be preferred before large fees and customs? Is there any comparison between the expectation of a cringing bow, or a low hat, and mortification to all such vanities and fopperies; especially with those who, in a peculiar manner, hope to receive their inheritance, and make their harvest in the next life? This was well thought of indeed: but for all that if you please, Sir, we will consider a little some of those remarkable inconveniencies, that do most undoubtedly attend upon the ministers being so meanly provided for.

First of all, the holy men of God, or the ministry in general, hereby is disesteemed, and rendered of small account. For though they be called the men of God, yet when it is observed, that God seems to take but little care of them in making them tolerable provisions for this life, or that men are suffered to take away that which God was pleased to provide for them, the people are presently apt to think, that they belong to God no more than ordinary folks, if so much. And although it is not to be questioned but that the laying on of hands is a most divine institution; yet it is not all the bishops hands in the world, laid upon a man, if he be either notoriously ignorant, or dismally poor, that can procure him any hearty and lasting respect.

respect. For though we find that some of the disciples of Christ; that carried on and established the great designs of the gospel, were persons of ordinary employments and education; yet we see little reason to think that miracles should be continued to do that, which natural endeavours, assisted by the spirit of God, are able to perform. And if Christ were still upon earth to make bread for such as are his peculiar servants, and declarers of his mind and doctrine, the laity, if they please, should eat up all the corn themselves, as well the tenth sheaf, as the other; but seeing it is otherwise, and that that miraculous power was not left to the succeeding clergy; for them to beg their bread; or depend for their subsistence upon the good pleasure and humour of their parish, is a thing that renders that holy office very much slighted, and disregarded.

That constitution therefore of our church was a most prudent design; that says, that all who are ordained, shall be ordained to somewhat; Not ordained at random, to preach in general to the whole world, as they travel up and down the road, but to this or that particular parish. And no question the reason was to prevent spiritual-peddling, and gadding up and down the country with a bag of trifling and insignificant sermons.

sermons; enquiring, who will buy any doctrine? So that no more might be received into holy orders, than the church had provision for. But so very little is this regarded, that if a young divinity-intender, has but got a sermon of his own, or of his fathers, although he knows not where to get a meal's meat, or one penny of money by his preaching, yet he gets a qualification from some beneficed man or other, who perhaps is no more able to keep a curate, than I am to keep ten foot-boys, and so he is made a preacher. And upon this account I have known an ordinary divine, whose living would but just keep himself and his family from melancholy and despair, shroud under his protection as many curates, as the best nobleman in the land has chaplains. Now, many such as these go into orders against the sky falls; foreseeing no more likelihood of any preferment coming to them, than you or I do of being secretaries of state. Now, so often as any such as these, for want of maintenance, are put to any unworthy and disgraceful shifts, this reflects disparagement upon all that order of holy men.

And we must have a great care of comparing our small preferred clergy with those but of the like fortune in the church of Rome, they having many arts and devices
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of gaining respect and reverence to their office, which we count neither just nor warrantable. We design no more than to be in a likely capacity of doing good, and not discrediting our religion, nor suffering the gospel to be disesteemed: But their aim is clearly, not only by cheats, contrived tales, and feigned miracles, to get money in abundance; but to be worshipped, almost deified, is as little as they will content themselves withal. For, how can it be, but that the people belonging to a church, wherein the supreme governor is believed never to err, either purely by virtue of his own single wisdom, by or the help of his inspiring chair, or by the assistance of his little infallible cardinals (for it matters not where the root of not being mistaken lies) I say, how can it be, but that all that are believers of such extraordinary knowledge, must needs stand in most direful awe, not only of the foresaid supreme, but of all that adhere to him, or are in any ghostly authority under him? And although it so happens, that this same extraordinary knowing person is pleased to trouble himself with a good large proportion of this vile and contemptible world, so that should he now and then, upon some odd and cloudy day, count himself mortal, and be a little mistaken; yet he has chanced

ced to make such a comfortable provision for himself and his followers, that he must needs be sufficiently valued and honoured amongst all : But had he but just enough to keep himself from catching cold, and starving so long as he is invested with such spiritual sovereignty, and such a peculiar privilege of being infallible, most certainly, without quarrelling, he takes the road of all mankind.

And as for the most inferior priests of all, although they pretend not to such perfection of knowledge, yet there be many extraordinary things, which they are believed to be able to do, which beget in people a most venerable respect towards them ; such is the power of making God in the sacrament ; a thing that must infallibly procure an infinite admiration of him that can do it, though he scarce knows the ten commandments, and has not a farthing to buy himself bread. And then when Christ is made, their giving but half of him to the laity, is a thing also, if it be minded, that will very much help on the business, and make the people stand at a greater distance from the clergy. I might instance likewise in their auricular confessions, injoyning of penance, forgiving sins, making of saints, freeing people from purgatory, and many such useful tricks they have

have, and wonders they can do, to draw in the forward believing laity into a most right-worshipful opinion, and honourable esteem of them. And therefore, seeing our holy church of England counts it not just, nor warrantable thus to cheat the world, by belying the scriptures, and by making use of such falshood and stratagems to gain respect and reverence, it behoves us certainly to wish for, and endeavour all such means as are useful and lawful, for the obtaining the same.

I might here, I think, conveniently add, that though many preferments amongst the clergy of Rome may possibly be as small as some of ours in England, yet we are to be put in mind of one more excellent contrivance of theirs, and that is, the denial of marriage to priests, whereby they are freed from the expences of a family, and a train of young children, that upon my word, will soon suck up the milk of a cow or two, and grind in pieces a few sheaves of corn. The church of England therefore thinking it not fit to oblige their clergy to a single life, and I suppose are not likely to alter their opinion, unless they receive better reasons for it from Rome, than have been as yet sent over; he makes a comparison very wide from the purpose, that goes about to try the livings here in England, by those of the church

church of Rome : There being nothing more frequent in our church, than for a clergyman to have three or four children to get bread for, by that time one in theirs shall be allowed to go into holy orders.

There is still one thing remaining, which ought not to be forgotten, (a thing that is sometimes urged, I know, by the papists, for the single life of the priests) that does much also lessen the esteem of our ministry : and that is, the poor and contemptible employment that many children of the clergy are forced upon, by reason of the meanness of their fathers revenue. It has happened, I know, sometimes, that whereas it has pleased God to bestow upon the clergyman a very sufficient income ; yet such has been his carelessness, as that he hath made but pitiful provisions for his children. And on the other side, notwithstanding all the good care and thoughtfulness of the father, it has happened at other times that the children, beyond the power of all advice, have seemed to be resolved for debauchery ; but to see clergymen's children condemned to the walking of horses, to wait upon a tapster, or the like, and that only because their father was not able to allow them a more genteel education, are such employments that cannot

not but bring great disgrace and dishonour upon the clergy.

But this is not all the inconvenience that attends the small income, the portion of some clergymen: for besides that the clergy in general is disesteemed, they are likely also to do but little good in their parish. For it is a hard matter for the people to believe that he talks any thing to the purpose, that wants ordinary food for his family, and that his advice and exposition can come from above, that is scarce defended against the weather. I have heard a travelling poor man beg with very good reason, and a great stream of seasonable rhetoric, and yet it has been very little minded, because his cloaths were torn, or at least out of fashion: And on the other side, I have heard but an ordinary saying, proceeding from a fine suit, and a good lusty title of honour, highly admired; which would not possibly have been hearkened to, had it been uttered by a meaner person; yet by all means, because it was a fancy of his worship's, it must be counted high, and notably expressed. If indeed this world were made of sincere and pure beaten virtue, like the gold of the first age, then such idle and fond prejudices would be a very vain supposal: and the doctrine that preceeded from the most tattered and contemptible

temptible habit, and the most sparing diet, would be as acceptable as that which floweth from a filken cassock, and the best cheer: But seeing the world is not absolutely perfect, it is to be questioned, whether he that runs upon trust for every ounce of provision he spends in his family, can scarce look from his pulpit into any seat of the church, but that he spies somebody or other that he is beholden to, and depends upon; and for want of money has scarce confidence to speak handsomely to his sexton; it is to be questioned, I say, whether one thus destitute of all tolerable subsistence, and thus flattered and distracted with most necessary cares can either invent with discretion, or utter with courage any thing that may be beneficial to his people, whereby they may become his diligent attenders, and hearty respecters.

And as the people do almost resolve against being amended or bettered by that minister's preaching, whose circumstances, as to this life, are so bad, and his condition so low; so likewise is their devotion very cool, and indifferent in hearing, from such-a-one, the prayers of the church. The divine service, all the world know, is the same, if read in the most magnificent cathedral, or in the most private parlour: Or, if performed

formed by the archbishop himself, or by the meanest of his priests : But as the solemnity of the place, besides the consecration of it to God Almighty, do much influence upon the devotion of the people : so also the quality and condition of the person that reads it. And although there be not that acknowledged difference between a priest comfortably provided for, and him that is in the thorns and bryars, as there is between one placed in great dignity and authority, and one that is in less ; yet such a difference the people will make, that they will scarce hearken to what is read by the one, and yet be most religiously attentive to the other. Not surely that any one can think, that he whose countenance is chearly, and his barns full, can petition heaven more effectually, or prevail with God for the forgiveness of a greater sin, than he who is pittifully pale, and is not owner of an ear of corn : yet most certainly they do not delight to confess their sins, and sing praises to God with him, who sighs more for want of money and victuals, than for his trespasses and offences. Thus it is, and will be, do you and I (Sir) what we can to the contrary. Did our church indeed believe with the papists, every person rightfully ordained, to be a kind of God Almighty, working miracles, and doing wonders

wonders: then would people most readily prostrate themselves to every thing, in holy orders, though it could but just creep: But being our church counts those of the clergy to be but mortal men, (though peculiarly dedicated to God and his service) their behaviour, their condition and circumstances of life will necessarily come into our value, and esteem of them. And therefore it is to no purpose for men to say, that this need not be; it being but mere prejudice, humour and fancy: And that if the man be truly in holy orders, that is the great matter: And from thence come blessings, absolution, and intercession through Christ with God: And that it is not philosophy, languages, ecclesiastical history, prudence, discretion, and reputation, by which the minister can help us on towards heaven: Notwithstanding this I say again, that seeing men are men, and seeing that we are of the Church of England, and not of that of Rome, these things ought to be weighed and considered; and for want of being so, our Church of England has suffered much.

And I am almost confident, that since the reformation, nothing has more hindered people from a just estimation of a form of prayer, and our holy liturgy, than employing a company of boys, or old illiterate mumblers

to read the service. And I do verily believe that this very day, especially in cities and corporations, (which make up the third part of our nation) there is nothing that does more keep back some dissatisfied people from church, until service be over, than that it is read by some ten or twelve-pound-man, with whose parts and education they are so well acquainted, as to have reason to know, that he has but just skill enough to read the lessons with twice conning over. And though the office of the reader, be only to read word for word, and neither to invent and expound : yet people love he should be a person of such worth and knowledge, as it may be supposed he understands what he reads. And although for some it were too burthenfome a task to read the service twice a day, and preach as often ; yet certainly it were much better if the people had but one sermon in a fortnight or month, so the service was performed by a knowing and valuable person, than to run an unlearned rout of contemptible people into holy orders, on purpose only to say the prayers of the church, who perhaps shall understand very little more than a hollow pipe made of tin or wainscot.

Neither do I here at all reflect upon Cathedrals ; where the prayers are usually read by some grave and worthy person : and as for
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the unlearned fingers, whether boys or men, there is no more complaint to be made, as to this case, than that they have not an all-understanding organ, or a prudent and discreet cornet.

Neither need people be afraid that the minister for want of preaching should grow stiff and rusty, supposing he came not into the pulpit every week : For he may spend his time very honestly, either by taking better care of what he preaches, and by seriously considering what is most useful and seasonable for the people ; and not what subject he can preach upon with most ease, or upon what text he can make a brave speech, for which no body shall be better, or where he can best steal without being discovered, as is the practice of many divines in private parishes : or else he may spend it in visiting the sick, instructing the ignorant, and recovering such as are gone astray : For though there be churches built for public assemblies, for public instruction, and exhortation ; and though there be not many absolutely plain places of scripture that do oblige the minister to walk from house to house, yet certainly people might receive much more advantage from such charitable visits and friendly conferences, than from general discourses levelled at the whole world ; where perhaps

the greatest part of the time shall be spent in useless prefaces, dividings, and flourishings. Which thing is very practicable, excepting some vast parishes : In which also it is much better to do good to some, than none at all.

There is but one calamity more that I shall mention, which though it need not absolutely, yet it does too frequently accompany the low condition of many of the clergy : And that is, it is a great hazard, if they be not idle, intemperate and scandalous. I say, I cannot prove it strictly and undeniably that a man smally beneficed, must of necessity be dissolute and debauched : but when we consider, how much he lies subject to the humour of all kind of reprobates ; and how easily he is tempted from his own house of poverty and melancholy : it is to be feared, that he will be willing too often to forsake his own study of a few scurvy books, and his own habitation of darkness, where there is seldom eating or drinking, for a good lightsome one, where there is a bountiful provision of both. And when he comes here, though he swears not at all, yet he must be sure to say nothing to them that do it, by all that they can think of : And though he judges it not fit to lead the forelorn in vice and profaneness ; yet, if he goes
about

about to damp a frolic, there is great danger, not only of losing his Sunday dinner, but all opportunities of such future refreshments, for his niceness and squeamishness. And such as are but at all disposed to these lewd kind of meetings, besides the devil, he shall have solicitors enough, who count all such revelling occasions very unfavoury, and unhallowed, unless they have the presence of some clergyman to sanctify the ordinance: Who if he sticks at his glass, bless him, and call him but doctor, and it slides presently. I take no delight, I must confess, to insist upon this, but only I could very much wish that such of our governors, as go amongst our small preferred clergy, to take a view of the condition of the church and chancel, that they would make but enquiry whether the minister himself be not much out of repair.

I have now done, Sir, with the grounds of that disesteem that many of the clergy lie under, both by the ignorance of some, and the extreme poverty of others; and I should have troubled you no farther, but that I thought it convenient not to omit the particular occasions that do concur to the making up of many of our clergy so pitiably poor and contemptible.

The first thing that contributes much to
F 3 the

the poverty of the clergy, is the great scarcity of livings: Churches and chappels we have enough, it is to be confessed, if compared with the bigness of our nation: But in respect of that infinite number that are in holy orders, it is a very plain case, that there is a very great want. And, I am confident that in a very little time I could procure hundreds that should ride both sun and moon down, and be everlastingly yours, if you could help them but to a living of twenty-five, or thirty pounds a year: And this I suppose to be chiefly occasioned upon these two accounts; either from the eagerness and ambition that some people have of going into orders; or from the refuge of others into the church; who being otherwise disappointed of a livelihood, hope, to make sure of one by that means.

First, I say, that which encreases the unprovided for number of the clergy, is people posting into orders, before they know their message or business, only out of a certain kind of pride and ambition. Thus some are hugely in love with the mere title of priest, or deacon: never considering how they shall live, or what good they are likely to do in their office: but only they have a fancy that a cassock, if it be made long, is a very handsome garment, though it be never

ver paid for : And that the desk is clearly the best, and the pulpit the highest seat in all the parish ; that they shall take place of most but esquires and right worshipfuls : That they shall have the honour of being spiritual guides and counsellors : and they shall be supposed to understand more of the mind of God than ordinary, though perhaps they scarce know the old law from the new, nor the canon from the apocrypha. Many, I say, such as these there be, who know not where to get two groats, nor what they have to say to the people, but only because they have heard that the office of a minister is the most noble and honourable employment in the world, therefore they, not knowing in the least what the meaning of that is, orders by all means must have, though it be to the disparagement of that holy function.

Others also there be, who are not so highly possessed with mere dignity of the office, and honourableness of the employment, but think, had they but a license and authority to preach, Oh how they could pay it away ! And that they can tell the people such strange things, as they never heard before in all their lives : That they have got such a commanding voice, such heart-breaking expressions, such a peculiar method of text-dividing, and

such notable helps for the interpreting all difficulties in scripture that they can shew the people a much shorter way to heaven, than has been as yet made known by any. such a forwardness as this, of going into holy orders, either merely out of an ambitious humour of being called a priest, or of thinking they could do such feats and wonders, if they might be but free of the pulpit, has filled the nation with many more divines, than there is any competent maintenance for in the church.

Another great crowd that is made in the church, is by those, that take in there only as a place of shelter and refuge: Thus we have many turn priests and deacons, either for want of employment in their profession of law, physic, or the like: or having been unfortunate in their trade: or having broken a leg or an arm, and so disabled from following their former calling: or, having had the pleasure of spending their estate, or being (perhaps deservedly) disappointed of their inheritance. The church is a very large and good sanctuary, and one spiritual shilling is as good as three temporality shillings: Let the hardest come to the hardest: if they can get by heart, *Quid est Fides?* *Quid est Ecclesia?* *Quot sunt Concilia Generalia?* and gain orders, they may prove readers.

ers or preachers, according as their gifts and opportunities shall lie. Now, many such as these, the church being not able to provide for (as there is no great reason that she should be solicitous about it) must needs prove a very great disparagement to her: They coming hither just as the old heathens use to go to prayers: When nothing would stop the anger of the Gods, then for a touch of devotion: And if there be no way to get victuals, rather than starve, let us read or preach.

In short, Sir, we are perfectly overstocked with professors of divinity: there being scarce employment for half of those who undertakes that office. And unless we had some of the Romish tricks, to ramble up and down, and cry pardons and indulgences: Or for want of a living, have good store of clients in the business of purgatory, or the like, and so make such unrighteous gains of religion, it were certainly much better if many of them were otherwise determined. Or unless we had some vent for our learned ones beyond the sea, and could transport so many tun of divines yearly, as we do other commodities, with which the nation is overstocked; we do certainly very unadvisedly to breed up so many to that holy calling, or to suffer so many to steal into orders, seeing
F 5 there

there is not sufficient work and employment for them.

The next thing that does much heighten the misery of our church, as to the poverty of it, is the gentry designing, not only the weak, the lame, and usually the most ill-favoured of their children for the office of the ministry, but also such as they intend to settle nothing upon for their subsistence; leaving them wholly to the bare hopes of church-preferment. For, as they think, let the thing look how it will, it is good enough for the church: and that if it had but limbs enough to climb the pulpit, and eyes enough to find the day of the month, it will serve well enough to preach and read service: So likewise they think they have obliged the clergy very much, if they please to bestow two or three years education upon a younger son at the university, and then commend him to the grace of God, and the favour of the church, without one penny of money, or inch of land. You must not think that he will spoil his eldest son's estate, or hazard the lessening the credit of the family, to do that which may tend any way to the reputation and honour of the clergy. And thus it comes to pass that you may commonly ride ten miles, and scarce meet with a divine that is worth above two spoons.

spoons and a pepper-box, besides his living or spiritual preferments. For, as for the land, that goes sweeping away with the eldest son, for the immortality of the family; and as for the money, that is usually employed for to bind out, and set up the other children. And thus you shall have them make no doubt of giving five hundred or a thousand pounds for stock to them: But for the poor divinity-son, if he gets but enough to buy a broad hat at second hand, and a small system or two of faith, that is counted stock sufficient for him to set up withal. And possibly he might make some kind of shift in this world, if any body will engage that he shall have neither wife nor children: but if it so falls out that he leaves the world, and behind him either the one or the other; in what a dismal condition are these likely to be and how will their said calamities reflect upon the clergy? So dismal a thing is this commonly judged, that those that at their departure out of this life are piously and virtuously disposed, do usually reckon the taking care for the relief of the poor ministers widows, to be an opportunity of as necessary charity, as the mending of the highways, and the erecting of hospitals.

But neither are spiritual preferments, only scarce by reason of that great number that lie hovering over them, and that they that are thus upon the wing are usually destitute of any other estate and livelihood; but also when they come into possession of them, they finding for the most part nothing but a little sauce and second course, pigs, geese and apples, must needs be put upon great perplexities for the standing necessities of a family. So that if it be enquired by any one, how comes it to pass that we have so many in holy orders that understand so little, and that are able to do so little service in the church? If we would answer plainly and truly, we may say, because they are good for nothing else. For, shall we think that any man that is not cursed to uselessness, poverty and misery, will be content with twenty or thirty pounds a year? For though in the bulk it look at first like a bountiful estate: yet, if we think of it a little better, we shall find that an ordinary bricklayer or carpenter (I mean not your great undertakers and master-workmen) that earns constantly but his two shillings a day, has clearly a better revenue, and has certainly the command of more money: For that the one has no dilapidations, and the like, to consume a great part of his weekly wages, which

which you know how much the other is subject unto. So that as long as we have so many small and contemptible livings belonging to our church (let the world do what it can) we must expect that they should be supplied by very lamentable and unserviceable things : For that nobody else will meddle with them : Unless one in an age, abounding with money, charity and goodness, will preach for nothing. For if men of knowledge, prudence and wealth, have a fancy against a living of twenty or thirty pounds a year : There is no way to get them into such an undertaking, but by sending out a spiritual press : For that very few volunteers that are of worth (unless better encouraged) will go into that holy warfare : But it will be left to those who cannot devise how otherwise to live.

Neither must people say, that besides bishopricks, prebends, and the like, we have several brave benefices, sufficient to invite those of the best parts, education and discretion. For imagine one living in forty is worth a hundred pounds a year, and supplied by a man of skill and wholesome counsel, what are the other thirty nine the better for that? What are the people about Carlisle bettered by his instructions and advice who lives at Dover? It was certainly our Saviour's

Saviour's mind, not only that the gospel should be preached unto all nations at first, but that the meaning and power of it should be preserved and constantly declared to all people, by such as had judgment to do it.

Neither again must they say, that cities, corporations, and the great trading towns of this nation, (which are the strength and glory of it, and that contain the useful people of the world) are usually instructed by very learned and judicious persons. For I suppose, that our Saviour's design was not that mayors, aldermen, and merchants, should be only saved; but also that all plain country people should partake of the same means: Who, though they read not so many Gazettes, as a citizen, nor concern themselves where the turk or king of France sets on next; yet the true knowledge of God is now so plainly delivered in scripture, that there wants nothing but sober and prudent offers of the same, to make it saving to those of the meanest understandings. And therefore in all parishes, if possible; there ought to be such a fixt and settled provision, as might reasonably invite some careful and prudent person, for the peoples guide and instruction in holy matters.

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And furthermore : It might be added, that the revenue belonging to most of corporation livings is no such mighty business : For were it not for the uncertain and humourfome contribution of the well-pleased parishioners, the parson and his family might be easily starved, for all the lands or in-come that belongs to his church. Besides the great mischief that such kind of hired preachers have done in the world, which I shall not stay here to insist upon.

And as we have not churches enough, in respect of the great multitude that are qualified for a living ; so, considering the smallness of the revenues, and the number of the people that are to be the hearers, it is very plain that we have too many. And we shall many times find two churches in the same yard, when as one would hold double the people of both the parishes : And if they were united for the encouragement of some deserving person, he might easily make shift to spend very honestly and temperately the revenue of both. And what though churches stand at a little further distance ; people may please to walk a mile without distemp'ring themselves ? when as they shall go three or four to a market to sell two penny-worth of eggs.

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But suppose they resolve to pretend, that they shall catch cold (the clouds being more than ordinary thick upon the funday, as they usually are, if there be religion in the case) and that they are absolutely bent upon, having instruction brought to their own town: why might not one sermon a day, or rather than fail one in a fortnight, from a prudent and well esteemed of preacher, do as well as two a day from him, that talks all the year long, nothing to the purpose, and thereupon is laughed at and despised?

I know what people will presently say to this, viz. That if upon funday the church-doors be shut, the ale-houses will be open. And therefore there must be somebody, though never so weak and lamentable, to pass away the time in the church, that the people may be kept sober and peaceable. Truly, if religion and the worship of God consisted only in negatives; and that the observation of the sabbath was only not to be drunk: then they speak much to the purpose; but if it be otherwise, very little. It being not much unlike (as it is the fashion in many places) to the sending of little children of two or three years old to a school-dame, without any design of learning one letter, but only to keep out of the fire and water.

Laft

Last of all, people must not say that there needs no great store of learning in a minister and therefore a small living may answer his deserts; for that there be homilies made on purpose by the church for young beginners and slow inventors. Whereupon it is that such difference is made between giving orders and license to preach; the last being granted only to such as the bishop shall judge able to make sermons.

But this does not seem to do the business: For, though it be not necessary for every guide of a parish to understand all the oriental languages, or to make exactly elegant or profound discourses for the pulpit; yet most certainly it is very requisite that he should be so far learned and judicious, as prudently to advise, direct, inform and satisfy the people in holy matters, when they demand it, or beg it from him. Which to perform readily and judiciously, requires much more discretion and skill, than upon long deliberation, to make a continued talk of an hour, without any great discernible failing. So that were a minister tied up never to speak one sentence of his own invention out of the pulpit in his whole life-time, yet doubtless many other occasions there be, for which neither wisdom nor reputation should

should be wanting in him that has the care and government of a parish.

I shall not here go about to please myself with the imagination of all the great tithes being restored to the church, having little reason to hope to see such days of irtue. Nor shall I here question the almightiness of former kings and parliaments; nor dispute whether all the king Henries in the world, with never such a powerful parliament, were able to determine to any other use, what was once solemnly dedicated to God and his service. But yet, when we look over the prefaces to those acts of parliaments, whereby some church-revenues were granted to Henry VIII. one cannot but be much taken with the ingenuity of that parliament: That when the king wanted a supply of money, and augmentation to his revenue, how handsomly out of the church they made provision for him, without doing themselves any injury at all: For, say they, “ seeing his majesty is our joy and life, seeing that he is so couragious and wise, seeing that he is so tender of, and well-affected to all his subjects: and that he has been at such large expences for five and twenty whole years to defend and protect this his realm; therefore in all duty and gratitude, and as a manifest token of our unfeigned thankfulness, we do
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grant unto the king, and his heirs for ever, &c." It follows as closely as can be, That because the king had been a good and deserving king, and had been at much trouble and expence for the safety and honour of the nation, that therefore all his wants shall be supplied out of the church : as if all the charges that he had been at, was upon the account only of his ecclesiastical subjects, and not in relation to the rest.

It is not, Sir, for you and I to guess which way the whole clergy in general might be better provided for. But sure it is, and must not be denied, that so long as many livings continue as they now are, thus impoverished ; and that there be so few encouragements for men of sobriety, wisdom, and learning, we have no reason to expect much better instructors and governors of parishes, than at present we commonly find.

There is a way, I know, that some people love marvelously to talk of, and that is a just and equal levelling of ecclesiastical preferments. What a delicate refreshment, say they, would it be, if twenty or thirty thousand pounds a year were taken from the bishops, and discreetly sprinkled amongst the poorer and meaner sort of the clergy? how would it rejoice their hearts, and encourage them in their office? What need those great
and

and sumptuous palaces, their city, and their country houses, their parks and spacious waters, their costly dishes and fashionable fauces? May not he that lives in a small thatched house, that can scarce walk four strides in his own ground, that has only read well concerning venison, fish, and fowl; may not he, I say, preach as loud, and to as much purpose, as one of those high and mighty spiritualists? Go to then, seeing it hath pleased God to make such a bountiful provision for his church in general, what need we be solicitous about the amending the low condition of many of the clergy, when as there is such a plain remedy at hand, had we but grace to apply it? This invention pleases some mainly well: but for all the great care they pretend to have of the distressed part of the clergy. I am confident, one might easily guess what would please them much better: If instead of augmenting small benefices, the bishops would be pleased to return them those lands that they purchased in their absence. And then as for the relieving of the clergy, they would try if they could find out another way.

But art thou in good earnest my excellent contriver; dost thou think that if the greatest of our church preferments were wisely parcelled

parceled out amongst those that are in want, it would do much feats and courtesies? And dost thou not likewise think, that if ten or twenty of the lustiest noblemens estates of England were cleverly sliced among the indigent, would it not strangely refresh some of the poor laity, that cry small coal, or grind scissars? I do suppose that if God should afterwards incline thy mind (for I fancy it will not be as yet a good while) to be a benefactor to the church: thy wisdom may possibly direct thee to disperse thy goodness in smaller parcels, rather than to flow in upon two or three with full happiness. But if it be my inclination to settle upon one ecclesiastical person, and his successors for ever, a thousand pounds a year; upon condition only to read the service of the church once in a week, and thou takest it ill, and findest fault with my prudence, and the method of my munificence; and sayest, that the stipend is much too large for such a small task: Yet, I am confident, that should I make thy laityship heir of such an estate, and oblige thee only to the trouble and expence of the spending a single chicken, or half a dozen of larks, once a year in commemoration of me, that thou wouldest count me the wisest man that ever was since
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the creation: And pray to God, never to dispose my mind to part with one farthing of it for any other use than for the service of thyself, and thy family. And yet, so it is, that because the bishops, upon their first being restored, had the confidence to levy fines according as they were justly due, and desired to live in their own houses (if not pulled down) and to receive their own rents; presently they cry out, the churchmen have got all the treasure and money of the nation into their hands. If they have any, let them thank God for it, and make good use of it, weep not beloved, for there is very little hopes, that they will cast it all into the sea, on purpose to stop the mouths of them that say they have too much.

What other contrivances there may be for the settling upon ministers in general a sufficient revenue for their subsistence and encouragement in their office; I shall leave to be considered of by the governors of learning and religion. Only, thus much is certain, that so long as the maintainance of many ministers is so very small, it is not to be avoided, but that a great part of them will want learning, prudence, courage, and esteem to do any good where they live. And what if we have (as by all must be acknowledged) as wise and learned bishops as be
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in the world ; and many others of very great understanding, and wisdom, yet as was beforehinted, unless there be provided for most towns and parishes, some tolerable and sufficient guides ; the strength of religion, and the credit of the clergy will daily languish more and more, Not that it is to be believed, that every small country parish should be altogether hopeless as to the next life, unless they have a Hooker, a Chillingworth, a Hammond, or a Sanderfon, dwelling among them ; but requisite it is, and might be brought about, that somebody there should be, to whom the people have reason to attend and to be directed, and guided by him.

I have, Sir, no more to say, where it not that you find the word religion in the title ; of which in particular, I have spoken very little : Neither need I, considering how nearly it depends, as to its glory and strength, upon the reputation and mouth of the priest. And I shall add no more but this, viz. that among those many things that tend to the decay of religion, and of a due reverence of the holy scriptures, nothing has more occasioned it, than the ridiculous and idle discourses that are uttered out of pulpits. For when the gallants of the world do observe how the ministers themselves do jingle, quib-

quibble, and play the fool with their texts, no wonder if they, who are so inclinable to atheism, do not only deride and despise the priests, but droll upon the bible, and make a mock of all that is sober and sacred.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant,

August, 8th.

1670.

T. B.

SOME

SOME
OBSERVATIONS

UPON THE

ANSWER

TO AN ENQUIRY INTO

The Grounds and Occasions

OF THE

Contempt of the CLERGY.

WITH SOME

ADDITIONS.

IN A SECOND

LETTER to R. L.

By the same Author.

VOL. I.

G

SOME

THE
HISTORY OF THE
AMERICAN
REVOLUTION
AND THE
FALL OF THE
EMPIRE

OF THE

AMERICAN
REVOLUTION

TO THE
PRESENT
STATE

OF THE
REPUBLIC

OF THE

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OF THE

AMERICAN
REVOLUTION

THE
P R E F A C E
TO THE
R E A D E R.

SINCE I was last with you in this kind, I have almost been of as many professions and employments, as there be city-companies; and have had as many several names, as the Grand Seignior has titles of honour; for setting aside the vulgar and familiar ones of rogue, rascal, dog and thief (which may be taken by way of endearment, as well as out of prejudice or offence) as also those of more certain signification; as malicious rogue, ill-natured rascal, lay-dog

and spiteful thief: I say, setting aside all these, they have travelled me almost quite through the map. For in a moment, I got to the Streights, shot the Gulph, cut the Line, and was presently Barbarian, Indian, Turk and Jew. And, notwithstanding this, the business went on at home all the while besides; for there I was rebel, traytor, Scot, Sadducee, and Soci-nian: And then, you know, I had but a little way to Antichrist himself.

I thought it therefore the best and most honest way, not to conceal these things, that being fully satisfied of that pernicious poison that was in the former, you may carefully avoid the danger of being infected by this second: But if you are so bold as to venture a blowing up, look closely to it: For the plot lies deadly deep, and it
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will be between your legs before you be aware of it ; for this is full out as jesuitically contrived, as the other was said, and thought to be. But of all things, have a care of putting it into your pocket, for fear it takes fire, or runs away with your breeches. And if you can shun it, read it not when you are alone ; or, at least, not late in the evening ; for the venom is strongest about midnight, and seizes most violently upon the head, when the party is by himself. And if you happen on any doubtful expression, be sure you take it for the present in the worst sense ; for you may abate again, after the heat of the weather be over. And if at any time you find the viper begin to creep upon you ; run instantly out of your chamber, and get into any company, and fall to railing immediately as hard as ever

you can (nay, say somewhat to yourself as you go along in the streets for fury and passion whets the blood, and keeps the enemy at a distance, and is found to be as good against any bookish infection, as a glass of sack is against the plague. I shall not tell you one line of what is in it; and therefore consider well what you do, and look to yourself. But if you be resolved to meddle, be sure have a care of catching cold; and keep to a moderate diet, for there is danger and jeopardy in it besides.

And I must desire, that when you come at a neighbouring minister of the answerers, looking over his five hundred sermons, that you do not believe me: For I find, that he did not look them all over with his outward eye, but only called them over in his mind.

And I desire also, that the answerer
would

would believe himself, and not me : For I would not by any means, have him write a book only about that mistake. And, indeed, whereas he says in his first page, that one design of his writing, was to make an acknowledgment, that a great part of what I wrote was true : I wish, that either he would have let my truth have shifted for itself, without the help of his acknowledgment (for, I profess, he has prevented me killing I know not how many otters, or else, that he would have divided his letter into two parts, and have placed the answer by itself, and the acknowledgment by itself : Which if he had done, and picked them duly and carefully, he might have written all that which he calls answer, upon very little more than his thumb nail.

And I must particularly beg of the

cripture-nonconformists, that they be not too severe upon a small lay-mistake: For my bible not lying just under my elbow, I find, I have in one place made our Saviour say that, which indeed John Baptist spoke before-hand for him.

And, because I am in the begging humour, I must crave further, that if any of you hear of a second answer coming out against my former letter, concerning my putting the tarts before the chickens (for I am given to understand, that such an objection is urged) that by all means you presently stop the press; for most certainly chickens ought to have the precedence of tarts, both by an indispensable right of nature, and by the justest and oldest traditions of cookery: And I shall always be ready to acknowledge, rather than defend such mistakes.

S O M E

SOME
OBSERVATIONS
UPON THE
ANSWER
TO THE ENQUIRY INTO
The Grounds and Occasions
OF THE
Contempt of the CLERGY.

WHAT service you or I should do to the church or state, by cracking of nuts, I do not understand; excepting the case of chesnuts, upon which, as it has been reported, the kingdom of Naples has some mysterious dependance; but however, to this employment our old friend and acquaintance W. S. advises us, rather than to disturb the world with idle wishes, and dangerous endeavours of doing any good. For, although what I sent you in my last,

may possibly be most of it true, and might in the opinion of some hasty men be counted useful ; yet there be others of a more wary and deliberate judgment, that say it must not be true, neither shall it be true, because there is an antient and received axiom amongst statesmen ; *That all things that are true, are not fit to be said at all times* ; as the answer to my first letter most politically observes.

Now, Sir, this same friend of ours, does not tell me plainly, whether he expects to hear from me again ; and if he does, for my part, I know no more what to write, than he knows me. For his love and tenderness towards me is so very great, that it will suffer him to answer but to very little of my letter (as you know, Sir, friends, if they be dear indeed and indeed, are very loth to cross, and contradict one another) and therefore he troubles not himself much about that ; but only he assigns me over to, God knows, how many further answers ; as, first of all, I am to be quarrelled with by all the schoolmasters of the nation, for undervaluing the great ordinance-days of humiliation and repetition. Next of all I am to be versified upon particularly by the Westminster scholars ; who are to persecute me severely with poetical squibs.

squibs and crackers. If these do not effect the business, then Cowly is to be raised from the grave, on purpose to make a pindarie upon me. After all this, the convocation is to meet, and have a session on purpose, to pick out one of a nimble pen, and a ready wit, to recover the reputation of the meaner clergy. But if these all fail, and should not humble me, then by way of pigeons and a postscript, he advises the gentry of the nation to raise all the trained bands, and country-troops, to be in arms against me; and having well whetted their swords, to make sharp thrusts at me, and to wound my reputation, in order to the redemption of their cousin Hellen, who was carried captive to a small vicarage. In short, Sir, it is very plainly the opinion of the answerer, that if somebody does not take me in hand, and (as he says, pag. 22.) do not seek to lessen the value of my letter, and that very speedily, the church will certainly be all sunk by Michaelmas next, and the state will tumble after it in the following spring. Bless me! think I, what is the business? A man cannot wish a few honest and innocent wishes, but that presently he must be rhymed on, confuted and fought; but that he must be bound over to Westminster squibbers, hard thrusters, and reputation wounders. And

for what? Only for endeavouring to procure the meaner sort of the clergy, a little more money, and a few more books.

But, perhaps, Sir, there may be something else; we had best therefore look a little into the answerer, to see where the offences lie, and where we are likely to be quarrelled; for this gentleman letting off the gun very easily, fights but very little himself, but only sets out the ground for the battle; and claps his hands, and cries, holloo to the armies that are drawing up.

But before that be done, I cannot but take notice, that although our friend for old acquaintance sake (which possibly might be begun at Padua; for where else I should be acquainted with W. S. I cannot devise) in many places, is very prodigal of his sweet expressions towards me; yet, I perceive, it is always done with a very wary prudent reserve: For his love and good opinion of me, seldom hold above a page together, if so long. In one place of his preface, he thinks him, whom he answers, a very honest gentleman; but in another huff (says he) We are as good men as himself, and have reason to quarrel with the world, that we are not more admired and honoured. For my part, I began to call for my whinyard, being almost afraid that he would have drawn; but
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all was over presently again; for, in the next side, he falls into such a commendation of me, for joining the credit and the serviceableness of the clergy together, as if he would have fed me with nothing but sugar-sops and soft jellies, but yet, for all that, ere he closes up his preface; he sets my unwilling teeth to the difficult task of cracking nuts. Nay, sometimes his affection rises, and falls, within fix lines compass; for in the beginning of the first page of his answer, he seems somewhat timorous and doubtful: Either (*says he*) the author does truly believe, and affectionately bewail, or does very vainly, if not hypocritically too, enquire into the grounds and occasions of the contempt of the clergy. But this trembling and jealous fit was quickly over: for the very next line, he loves me like mad; saying, that he does readily believe (notwithstanding the frequent drolling that might make some severe men to doubt) that I am in good earnest. When I had read these words, doubtless, think I, now it will be a match; and I may venture now surely to speak for the great cake. But alas, this passion called love, is such a passion for changeableness! for before I had made an end of that side, all was dough again, and he falls
into

into another qualm, and doubts whether in many things I have said well.

And thus, Sir, he carries me from page to page: sometimes he makes me rich in imagination, and as illustrious as a peer of the realm; but, by and by, he takes away all my treasure, and credit (p. 80.) gives me an inevitable choice of fool or knave. Some flattering, and half friend would have only said, as he does, that all the gentry covet my company; and that my acquaintance lies with the learned clergy only. But alas, Sir, he knew full well, that this might have huffed and quite spoiled such an unsettled temper as mine; and therefore he knew how to spend good words moderately, and how to put in a dash of humiliation with discretion. To keep company only with worthies, and the learned, is too fattening and foggy; it would in time intoxicate, and breed conceit, and bad humours: and therefore my friend knew very well, how healthful and seasonable it would be for my constitution, to take sometimes fresh air, and to send me abroad to gather briefs. The truth of it is, I must perfectly resign up myself to his management; for whether I do or no, I perceive, he will dispose of me according to his good pleasure: Sometimes I am permitted to be in the right, sometimes

I must be in the wrong ; even according to the humour that he is in ; for once in so many pages, to keep me meek, it is convenient that faults should be found ; and then he applies both eyes to the book, and looks for them with all earnestness and diligence : And indeed, Sir, if I may so say, without seeming conceited of my own undertaking ; the answerer might as well have excepted against all the book ; and to make short of it, have pronounced it one entire and continued lie from beginning to ending, with as much reason, as to except against many of those places, which he has picked out to confute : which will more plainly appear by the choice of the objections that he has made against my letter : For having most carefully perused his answer, I profess, Sir, to you, that in my opinion, the most sturdy ones which are to be found in his whole book, are such as follow : viz.

That there is somewhat in Homer, besides an account of Achilles's toes, and the Grecians boots. That take two lads, the one sixteen the other fourteen years of age ; he of sixteen shall be wiser, than he of fourteen *cæteris paribus, i. e.* as he explains himself ; if at fourteen, the aforesaid sixteen lad happened to be as wise as the other is now. That every gentleman that keeps a chaplain, has not a cousin Abigail to wait upon his lady.

That

That it is lawful to take a preface from Adam, because the new testament refers to the old. That there is a neighbouring minister of his, that has above five hundred sermons by him; and having lately very well looked over the same, finds none of them to begin with an ingenious picture. That it is very allowable to shred into a sermon good store of Latin and Greek (at least Latin) though it be in a country parish; because old Mr. Dod uses to say, so much Latin so much flesh. That it is a great joy and refreshment to a minister's own understanding, to quote several languages, though nobody understands them but himself. That though it should be admitted, that for the most part, in a country village Latin might be spared; yet if it be out of St. Austin, it is very useful, though no creature in the parish understands one tittle of it; because ignorant people are not to be imposed upon. Lastly, that those little sentences, viz, As it were, if I may so say: and, with reverence be it spoken, are very mollifying sentences; and may with as much reason be used, as *si ita loqui liceat*, or *detur verbo venia*.

These, Sir, as far as I can perceive, are the most knocking and destroying objections against my book. As for the rest, he either most plainly, and grossly mistakes me; or else
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he tries to do it, but says the same that I do, (only he does not know of it) when he thinks he contradicts me : All which will appear afterwards in their due places ; for I would willingly be as careful to observe his method as he has been industrious to mistake my meaning.

The first thing wherein I am so shamefully and horribly out, is, that I have not sufficiently reckoned up the grounds and occasions of the contempt of the clergy. For that I having referred all to ignorance and poverty, I have says he (p. 5. &c.) most carelessly left out the papists, jesuits, quakers, nonconformists ; and (by his leave) he has forgot one, as well as I forgot the rest, and that is, the draining of the fens ; there being a near relation between atheism and the contempt of the clergy. But no man can think of all things at once.

Well ; and do you think, Sir, that our old friend is in good earnest, or does he droll ? Does he in his conscience believe that the papists do slight and undervalue our clergy ? Do they lay their plots and stratagems to make us daily more and more despised ? and does he think that they are really at the very bottom of their hearts, adversaries and enemies to the church of England ? well, suppose they be, what would he have me do in
this

this case? Must I set sail presently for Rome, or dispatch a letter forthwith to the pope, desiring him out of all love to tie up all his priests and jesuits, and not suffer any one of them to cross our seas : And furthermore to let his holiness know, that in good truth he does not do at all like a gentleman, to let his agents, and emissaries ramble up and down with swords, and long perukes, and other fashionable disguises ; inveigling those of our church, and searching up and down in unknown habits, for some of the least learned of our clergy, puzzling them with sophisms, and making their triumphs over them? Do you not think, Sir, that he would listen to this, as he did to the quaker that went over to convert him? Surely the answerer cannot be so ignorant of the Romish Church, and constitutions, as not to see, that so long as the pope believes himself supreme and infallible, or (which is all one) endeavours to carry on the humour of being thought and believed so to be ; so long as the protestants stand in their opinion for schismatics ; and they believe, or at least say they do, that there is no salvation out of their own church ; so long as they think themselves obliged, or pretend to think, that they ought to use all arts and means, to restore all again to themselves, and

and to frustrate all the intents of the reformation: Lastly, so long as they think themselves judges, or will judge what means are most likely to be effectual to bring about their designs, shall we imagine that they will beg our leave to comb their perukes, before they come out of their dressing-room? Or that they will take our advice what street they shall walk in; what company they shall keep, and whom they shall dispute with? Now, Sir, because I thought it next to impossible to hinder altogether their contriving our contempt, (it being in a manner in the body of their religion so to do) as also, that there be several wise and wholesome statutes of this realm, with all care and prudence at first made, and since often renewed (and now lately enforced by strict proclamation) to prevent their bad intentions towards us, and to defeat, as much as may be, their plots against us; if the answerer would but have considered of these things, and had he but had that same gratifying master of his, who used as he says, so to open his understanding in the case of Juvenal and Florus; perhaps he might begin to guess why I did not particularly insist upon the papists, as great occasions of the contempt of our clergy, but left them, and many such things, to be treated of by him:

In

In doing of which (although I am not apt to boast of good works) I did very friendly, for had I not left two or three such things untouched, he would have been hard put to it (as far as I perceive) to have found furniture for his answer.

But yet for all that, if I were highly pleased with my own model; and were resolved to hale, and fetch in all to my two chosen words of ignorance and poverty, and stiffly to defend the same: I could then, Sir, for a need, tell him, that many have been tempted to turn catholics (as they call them) for want of preferment; and many have been abused and slighted by them, and brought themselves and others of their profession, into contempt, for want of knowledge.

Now, though I never expected that all the clergy of England should be so subtile in logic, so cunning at untwisting a complex theme, so experimentally skilled in subject and prædicate, so accurate at forming a verb, and at hunting out an etymology to the first original (as I perceive the answerer is, by what he so earnestly recommends in several places) but that here and there one in a country might possibly be worsted by a keen and pinching jesuit, yet certainly, if the clergy in general were bet-

ter

ter furnished with all sorts and advantages of learning, it would be more difficult for those diligent enemies of ours, to meet with so frequent opportunities of victory and conquest: And thereby, you know, Sir, the grounds and occasions of the contempt of the clergy would be much lessened, though not altogether removed: For, I hope, that nobody counts me so extravagantly mad, and doating, as to think that I shall believe, that it might possibly be so contrived, that there should not be any living creature in orders in the whole land, but should be so rich and learned, as that he should never tempt any man to dis-esteem him; or that he should behave himself so worthily, and discreetly, that it were impossible for the vilest rascal, varlet, or infidel in the world, not to respect him, and attend to his doctrine; (which is a thing that the answerer has a great mind that I should say, because he can contradict it) seeing that I had several times in my letter, as also in the preface, said that I would propound nothing, as near as I could, but what was hopeful and practicable. Which thing, if he had been at leisure to have minded, he need not then have held up his hands so high, and repeat it ten or twelve times with such wonderment

ment, that I should refer all to poverty and ignorance.

I am very loth, Sir, to go about to abase the answerer's prizing himself, for discovering so many other several occasions of the contempt of the clergy, besides those which I mentioned: But I perceive he seems mightily concerned (as you know, Sir, one friend cannot but be for another) that I should be so lamentably mistaken, as to say, that whatever lessens the value of the clergy, or renders it less serviceable to the world, than might be reasonably hoped, may be all referred to ignorance and poverty. For, says he, (p. 7.) "The occasions of the contempt of the clergy are not only (on our part) ignorance and poverty." Again, (p. 18.) "You had said enough, says he, if our ignorance and poverty had been only some, or the main of those things that lessen our value, and not the only things." And (p. 22.) "Wherefore again, somewhat else is sometimes the occasion of the contempt of the clergy." And (p. 23.) "I wish, says he, you had not said, Whatever lessens the value," &c.—So that I perceive, if I had said that poverty and ignorance had been some of the causes, or the main or chief occasion, or the like, it had passed well enough; (I might possibly have had the
gentleman's

gentleman's daughter ;) but to say they are the only ; that there is nothing besides ; to put in that stabbing word whatever, it was an unkind, and unfriendly expression.

Truly, Sir, you know pretty well my temper ; and, I believe, would vouch for me, that I had no malice in my heart, when I said whatever. But I much wonder that the answerer, who did so often, and solicitously wish, that that same offensive word *whatever* had been left out, should overlook these other that are in the same sentence : viz. *than might be reasonably hoped* : Or if he did not, what did he think they meant ? he may believe me, that those words were not put in by chance, and (being slow to confess) now made use of to deliver me from a dreadful mistake : But intend thereby to signify two things ; first, that I would enquire into such courses, and grounds, as might be reasonable, and proper for me to enquire into ; and not into such things, as were already taken care of by the laws of the realm, or canons, and constitutions of our church, as was before hinted. And had we an act of parliament, that were in as good force against the poverty of the clergy, (which a worthy and H. Th. very learned author in a late treatise tells us, might be so ordered, as it might

might not be very grievous to the subject) as against the foreign and domestic enemies of the church; I had left out that as well as those many other causes, which the answerer thinks fit to mention: But indeed, as to that other business of want of learning, that would scarce be easily remedied by a vote of the house, except it were extraordinary full.

Another thing that I intend by those words, was, that I would meddle with nothing but what was almost impossible to be wholly avoided; and therefore at that time, I did not think it convenient (though perhaps afterwards I may) to tell the people, that there are a great many very wicked ones in the world, and always will be. Such I mean, who defying heaven, and even God himself; it is no wonder that they are not sparing to a clergyman: although he has a very large parsonage, and although he has all those same books, that the answerer says (p. 46.) he has heard of: Nay, though he be one of his neighbouring doctors, with his ratling coach; for we have those that can curse and swear, as loud as that can rattle and rumble, let the road be never so uneven, and the coachman drive never so hard; and so they will, so long as they give themselves up to the devil. But I
though

thought it not fit to write a letter to him, to chain up his busy spirits of darkness, from intermeddling with affairs on earth; nor to insert him for one ground or occasion of the contempt of the clergy. But this, I think, may conveniently be said, that whatever number we have of those that are despisers, not only of the clergy, but of all that is good; and that were I to write my first letter again, I cannot, by the blessing of God, think of any more proper way, either to recover them from perpetual ruin, or to abate their infecting of others, than with all earnestness to wish that there might be daily additions of such to our worthy clergy, whose counsel, value and example, might win them by degrees into some sense of religion, and better opinion of those that are more peculiarly the maintainers of the same.

I know there be some, who having a great mind to dislike something or other, think they have made a considerable objection against what I writ before, by saying, That I was very silent as to the carriage and conversation of the clergy; which may be partly true, and yet no great omission; because I thought with myself, that if there were any want of advice and exhortation to the clergy, it might be more proper to be

performed by such as had authority over them, and power to mind ecclesiastical censures: But, for my part, I know very little service that I could do in that kind, unless I should have rid up and down the country, and turned paritor, or informer; and so bring in a roll of such as are idle and negligent in their profession: An employment, I must confess, that I do not much approve of, but shall leave it to the ready and listening nonconformist; whose ill will to the present establishment of the church, would make them very glad of the office: And, I am confident, they would bring in a very fine bill since St. Bartholomew the famous, if they were but entrusted with the contriving of it.

And perhaps, this may in part satisfy what the answerer thought he said against me (p. 10.) viz. That integrity, together with learning, and an estate, is more considerable than either of them, or both together. Yes, truly that it is, by above ten in the hundred: But yet for all that, he need not to think, that supposing the great tithes should be bestowed upon a vicar, that he should presently fall to breaking all the commandments, and saying the creed backward; for that is, or at least must be his meaning, if he intended to gainsay what I had
had

had written ; that is, that learning, and a good convenient estate, are of none, or very small account and use in a clergyman ; if there be but integrity of life, and good conversation : Which, I say, I think is not extraordinary true : For take this same integrity, that has but little money, and very few books, and give this integrity a good library, and the knowledge thereof, and an hundred pounds a year ; and if this integrity be not more considerable, and do more good in the world, than poor, naked and unlearned integrity, I never saw the like of it ; especially in a clergyman, who you know so, Sir, since miracles are ceased, are supposed to come to a better knowledge of the mind of God, and better able to discover the same to the people that are committed to their care, by dedicating themselves, and their time, to that design and service.

It is just to as much purpose, and as much against me, when the answerer says on in the same page, viz. That very rich, and very learned clergymen, have been despised ; witness the bishops in the late times. Yes, truly, I must needs grant an old friend of mine, that taking away all their estates, the archbishop's head, and putting many of them in prison, are nota-

ble signs of their being despised : And he may remember also, what the same despising rascals did to our sovereign, the king ; and what would he infer from thence ? If any thing at all, it must be, that riches and knowledge are altogether as useless, and as subject to contempt, as poverty and ignorance : If he please, he may so infer ; but when he has done, he will scarce be able to hire two in a country to believe him, unless they be very special and inward friends.

But of all stratagems that he makes use of, to shew how vain and successful all my endeavours were likely to be ; that certainly argues the most of close and thick thinking, which he lucks upon (p. 12.) Nay, says he, I will venture further a little to make it appear (and indeed if there were ever venture made, this was one) that ignorance and poverty are not the only grounds of contempt ; for some clergymen are as much slighted for their great learning, as others are for their ignorance. Now, although he says in his preface, “ That he would not much boast of convincing the world, how much I was mistaken in what I undertook ;” yet I am confident of it, that this contrivance of his, did inwardly as much rejoice the cockles of his heart, as he fancies, that what I writ did sometimes

times much tickle my spleen. But wherein, I pray, Sir, are they flighted? O, says he, in their preaching; "A learned scholar-preacher can neither keep the people awake, nor make them write after him; whereas a plain right-down, less learned divine, shall make them stare and start again;" so would an honest block-river with his beetle, heartily calling at the church door, once in five or six minutes, as well as the most ecclesiastical fist, powerfully exercising upon edifying wainscot.

But does he think, Sir, that ignorance will out-preach learning? He is to remember, that into want of learning, I put also indiscretion, and want of the use of learning; and also consideration of the capacity of the auditors; and there be many other things besides Greek and Latin hard words, and some mysterious points, which to preach to common people, you had as good give them a lecture about squaring the circle: And therefore he did not hear me say, that the greatest mere scholar, is always either the most admired preacher, or really does the most good, because many other circumstances are required, upon which, the fame and success of a preacher does sometimes depend: But yet, thus far I durst venture to say (seeing that we are got

upon the venturing pin) that he that understands the holy scriptures best, and therein the mind of God explained; (under which, I comprehend all learning requisite for the same) he also that has the command of true and useful rhetoric; discerning what words are most proper and intelligible; and how they are so to be ordered, as they shall not make either any harsh and unpleasant noise, nor be difficultly understood; and that has besides an audible and graceful voice, a comely and unblamable gesture; if this man thus accomplished, be not more respected, and likely to do more good in general, than he that wants all, or has but some few of these, then it is a most rash and idle thing, to wish the very meanest we have of the clergy, to have had the opportunities of any better improvement.

But, Oh, the sanctified postures, the familiar and condescending similitudes, and the insinuating and melting voice! I hope, Sir, they do not resolve to muzzle my clergyman, or think that I intended only a mute divine; one that should only frown, and forehead his parishioners into a godly life, instead of prudently reproving them; and saying nothing to the purpose, should only cheer up the people, with drawing up
his

his chops into a pleasant smile, when the use of comfort is ready to come. Of which religious facemakers, we had a great plenty in the late zealous times; those, I mean, that use to turn up the glass, and spend a quarter of it in rocking of themselves into a still fit of prayer, and then breaking out into a sudden fright of devotion, as if they were risen from the dead. We are (thanks be to God) past those days, when the pulpiteers use to strip and truss themselves, as if they were to shew some spiritual tumbling; and so having hung up their cloaks, and put back their hair behind their ears; sometimes they were for bending backwards, as if they would take up a shilling in their eye-lids: sometimes again for stretching upon the cushion, as if they would turn over their heads, and shew you the double sommerfet; but then, if there came to be any extraordinary shew, and the occasion did require any transcendent feats of activity, and great agility of body, such as a public thanksgiving, or a solemn day of humiliation; such a time called only for close drawers, and the breeches were to be left at home, because they were great dampers of the power of spirit, and a vast hindrance to the efficacious carrying on the work of the day, and the immediately succeeding tax.

Then it was that godliness chiefly consisted in the management of the eye: and he that had the least pupil, was the most righteous; because most easily concealed by the rolling white. Then it was, that they would scarce let a round faced man go to heaven; but if he had but a little blood in his cheeks, his condition was counted very dangerous; and it was almost an infallible sign of absolute reprobation: And I will assure you, Sir, a very honest man of a sanguine complexion, if he chanced to come nigh an officious zealot's house, might be set in the stocks, only for looking fresh in a frosty morning; and yet, for all that, these pale and world-renouncing saints, should sily lick up all the sweetmeats of a small parish, and religiously suck down a pint or two of Malaga and then despise the creature, unless taken with moderation.

What the answerer meant, in saying that an unlearned preacher had many ways to keep people awake, and to make them as busy with their pens, as the clerks are in their chancery office; whereas a man of reason, and true eloquence should not so much as draw forth one sigh, tear, or drop of ink, I do not understand; for my part, I see nothing to the contrary, but that a person of good education and discretion (if he

he did not think it useless and fantastical) may hollow as loud as the most illiterate of all; for, Sir, if you remember, care was taken, that such as were designed for the ministry, should have, not only all their outward limbs, but also good, strong, and lasting entrails; which, you know, Sir, if the mouth does but open, and things be but a little ordered, will make noise enough. If indeed people were to be bellowed, or blown to heaven, then certainly their herdsman with his horn, might save more people of the parish, than the minister, though he splits his throat; and I deny not, but that man may be scared by a whole cannon or a crack of thunder, but scarce into a good life that will hold and continue; and although to the late famous Triers, it was an approved of sign of conversion, to have been in a great storm or tempest, and to have been a little frightened or affected therewith; yet I cannot forbear to say, that that person, who has been kept awake by a mere hideous noise, and such a strenuous voice that will not so much as let the poor jackdaws rest quietly upon the steeple: when he gets but once out of that jarring din, he may presently fall asleep, and as well try to meditate upon a sound of trumpets, as any thing

that he remembers towards the amendment of his life.

I did partly, Sir, promise to observe the answerer's method; but I am afraid I shall not be altogether so good as my word; and if I fail, I suppose it is no great matter; for I do not perceive that the closeness of his siege is such, as should strictly require any such thing: therefore before I proceed any further, as he tells me (p. 5.) that he has no reason to thank me, that I should take notice of no other occasions of the contempt of the clergy, but ignorance and poverty; so I am sure I have very little reason to thank him, for trying to make people believe, that I should say, that whatever disgrace or contempt did lie upon any of the clergy, it was altogether their own faults; to which purpose, I am confident, he speaks nigh twenty times in his book. By two or three places, Sir, you may guess at his meaning in the rest, (p. 6.) he says, I do almost insult over the poverty of the clergy; and that I do in a manner excuse the laity for despising the clergy; and (p. 18.) he wonders at me for thinking that the clergy is wholly necessary to their own shame; whereas it is oft-times their misfortune, as he says, he (p. 23.) and the matter had not been much, if he would have been content, to have

have been mistaken all alone by himself, but he must draw in the country gentlemen, and scandalize them; and set them to make a groundless and senseless speech, from what he pretends they should find in my book: saying, Look you here, Parson, have you seen this book? here is one that has made it as plain as the sun, that you are a company of dull blockheads, and that the reason that you are no more respected, is all your own fault; and so you may even sink in your own sorrows, there is nobody likely to pity you.

Surely, Sir, the answerer has got my book purposely printed for his own mistaking; for, I can find no such thing at all in mine, namely, that all the discredit, or calamity that falls upon any of the clergy is wholly, and altogether occasioned by themselves. But the contrary I find almost every page: as suppose a lad should be imposed upon, and made believe he is fit for the university, and thereupon should be presently sent away with Cato, Corderius, and Textor's epithets, for gunpowder-treason; and with *Mῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ* ———— and perhaps the beginning of the next verse, so fitted to his tongue, that it is ready to start out of his mouth at the first sight of the theatre, or King's college chappel: And

suppose when he comes there, that his parts are such, that the muses come upon him but very slowly, or that he cares not much for their further acquaintance; having been sufficiently banged out of all love to them at school already: Or, suppose he having a mind to study, has neither time, books, nor money to purchase them; but must go to the stationers, to look what is the English of a word: And that his friends being either not willing, or not able to maintain him there above five or six months, he goes and seeks his fortune; and so as it is in the fable, he skips into the pond, in hopes of a flock of sheep; but so it falls out, that he never arrives to the preferment of above twenty pounds a year; whereupon, Sir, upon these and the like occasions, it so happens that such an one possibly proves not very serviceable to the church, nor much esteemed by the people: Now can any one in the world, besides the answerer, be so mad as to think, that I who had reckoned up these, and many such occasions of the contempt of the clergy, and finding thereupon, here and there a person in orders, not so honoured and useful, as might be wished; should presently bid him (or tempt others, by what I say, to do it) Go hang, damn, or bury himself alive;

go sink, drown, or die in a ditch like a dog: he may even thank himself, it was perfectly his own: a great lazy lubber, that might have had a living of six or seven-score pounds a year, and he must be modest, and go pulling into a private corner with one of sixteen; an idle and unambitious coxcomb, that might have had his barns topt full of corn, besides two great stacks in the yard; and when he should be gathering in his refreshing harvest, for him to be counting up his few incoming eggs, or scrambling with the poor pig for plums under the damascene tree; an ill contriving rascal, that in his younger years should choose to lag the bag and the bottle a mile or two to school: and to bring home only a small bit of Greek or Latin most magisterially construed, and would not enter himself into one of the great schools of the land, where he might have received his belly full of knowledge in full chargers; and afterward having five or ten pounds a year plentifully allowed him by his friends, should forsake the university, and the advantages thereof and go sneaking into the country, and spend the prime of his years with a company of small grammar-fingers: A careless and improvident wretch, that should be so overseen, as to be descended

of such an humourfome and phlegmatic father, who was fo furly, and dull as to beftow upon him neither eftate nor parts ; or that fhould be fo inconfiderate and undifcerning as that he fhould fuffer himfelf to be begotten of fuch mean and ordinary parents : Whereas there be fo many fine and tall gentlefolks in the world, that could have given or procured him prefent preferment : away miserable and low contented mortal ! Weep on, and die ! finking in your own sorrows, and in your own contrived miferies ; for you are likely to have no help, pity or refpect from us.

After this rate, Sir, he difcredits the country gentry, in that fpeech, which he makes for them ; as if he could find any one creature in the whole nation (that ever faw my book) befides himfelf, fo egregioufly weak, as to miftake me fo grofly as he reprefents them to do.

Neither, Sir, would it fatisfy the answerer, to endeavour to make people believe that it was my opinion, that whatever difesteem any of the clergy did lie under, was perfectly occafioned by their own choice, and wholly to be attributed to their own neglect and imprudence, but he muft needs go about to draw me in, to undervalue the whole clergy of the land : which he has as much
reason

reason to hope to do (from any thing that I said) as to try to persuade me, that I promised in my first letter, to cut my own throat; and for that purpose, he has so ordered the business, that in the *Mercurius Librarius*, to the end of the title of his answer, these words are added, viz. "Wherein is contained a sober vindication of the clergy of England from the imputation of folly and ignorance." Now, Sir, although I did not spend much time in contriving a set commendation of our wise and honourable clergy; yet in several places I said so much, and acknowledged it so far, that I thought that nobody, that would but at all attend to what I writ, and were not very humourfome and peevish besides, could possibly mistake my meaning; my design being not to make a needless and solemn commemoration of the learning and wisdom of our clergy (which the whole world has always admired, and have reason still to do, and our adversaries to dread) but still to encrease the number of our admirers, and that we may become a greater terror to the enemies of our church. Neither, Sir, was I altogether ignorant, how much the ordinary sort of our English clergy do far excel in learning, the common priests

of

of the church of Rome. But, Sir, as I told you in my last, as there were very good reasons (ever since infallibility, and the several arts thereunto belonging, was laid aside) for which it might be convenient that our common clergy should be richer than theirs: So for the same reasons, it might be requisite (or at least very desirable) that it should be more learned; but for all this, Sir, the answerer taking no great delight in understanding what I meant, on he goes, (p. 25.) most historically shewing, that the English clergy, since the beginning of queen Elizabeth's reign, is much improved; and the reason is, because they can now preach much better, than the high-sheriff could then: Whom I must grant to be a most admirable preacher, if his fancy, and biscuits held out good to the end of his sermon; to which, were it worth the while to reply, it might be said, that supposing the clergy be somewhat improved since those days he speaks of; and that the rest of the world stood staring still at the same low degree of understanding then a clergyman, although but a little amended in his judgment, and excelling those of former times, would be much valued and respected. But suppose the laity have an odd kind of fancy to enquire, to improve, and in their way and proportion

proportion, to grow in knowledge also; then a little improvement in the clergy will not possibly be so hugely wondered at, as the answerer expects it should be, unless he could procure an order to have all that are now living in the world, to be presently knocked on the head, and to fetch from the grave the high-sheriff, and his ignorant halberteers, to admire the growth and increase of learning, that is now to be found in the present clergy. But for my part, I must confess, I know no reason to deny, that the clergy of the land does daily considerably improve; but withal, I do not perceive where the murder, witchcraft, or the jesuitism of the business lies, either in wishing that they may still proceed; or in guessing why they go on no faster.

I believe, Sir, you are sufficiently tired with reading the small devices, that the answerer makes use of to defeat the design of my book, and the hard shifts that he is sometimes put to, to contrive but a conscionable mistake; but when his parts grow low, and his invention flags, then he is for seeking out for one of my own supposed objections (and presently shutting the book, lest he should read any of the answer) he spends his time in paraphrasing upon that. How often, Sir, he fall into this humour,
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it would cost the reader near six-pence to know. I shall give you therefore at present, Sir, but one instance of it: About the beginning of (p. 32.) he wonders at me very much for seeming to say, That the worst of all scholars are picked out for divinity, For, says he, is it not a strange thing, that they who have diverted to other studies, should for a great part, prove excellent in their kind, able lawyers, expert physicians, &c. yet they only who settle to divinity, should for the most part, prove otherwise? Yes truly, it is a very strange thing: And I believe the like was scarce ever heard of, especially by an answerer, who will neither read, nor guess tolerably: For, if he had but taken that same prospective-glass, which he advised me to look upon the laity withal, (p. 5.) and had he but turned either end of it upon what I said, (p. 11. 17. 21. and 81.) perhaps his wondering in time would have somewhat abated; for there he might have found, that very few determine themselves to the profession of law, or physic, without the consideration of some estate, upon which they foresee they may be probably maintained, until they gain skill enough, and reasonable confidence, to profess what they design; and sure I am, that there is scarce now to be found a lawyer in the nation,

tion, that ever got, or is likely to get fauce for a pullet, but (besides his university preparations) has spent the best part of his time, for six or seven years together to fit himself for his intended employment; and as for those many others that go only to the inns of court, to learn and admire the excellent knack of eating without a trencher, or to know the porter's name, and the four terms, these are only a shame to themselves, no great discredit to the profession, because they never intend, nor endeavour to practise; and if they should go about it, it would be but to very little advantage for them to give a proof of their ill spent time; for he that palpably loses his business at the bar, once and again, merely for want of skill, and not out of pardonable mistake, he may even run home to his chamber, and lay aside his gown; for his sword will as well become him in Michaelmas-term, as in the long vacation.

And these, Sir, are the choice, and best of the reasons, that I can find in the answerer; upon which, he will not suffer any of the inferior sort of the clergy to come to any higher degree of knowledge, before they enter upon their holy employment. The next thing that he undertakes to shew, is, that supposing the ignorance of any of the clergy

clergy be such, as it were convenient to wish it less: yet, that I have either not truly assigned the causes of it, or have omitted many. And here in the first place, he falls upon me as severely, as the very castle-keeper himself could have almost done, for finding fault with the common method of schooling: In which, his first assault, about Greek and Latin, is so forcible and furious, his reasonings so killingly close and destroying, and all his deductions so securely backed and guarded, that I was almost tempted to renounce logic, and all its works, and never to come again within a furlong of an untwister of complex themes; but presently to clap hat under arm, and to run as hard as legs would carry me to the first man that sold any *Amo*, or *τὸ πῶ*. About the middle of, (p. 35.) (a place I am sure I shall no more forget than Maiston-moor) after a mild and gentle preface, as sweet and courteous as friends could devise, viz. I beg your pardon, says he, if I be not altogether of your opinion, as to the business of schooling. When, alas! (little thinking I of any such danger, so nigh at hand) without mercy he seizes upon me with the utmost violence, and dint of logic, and beginning with a most confounding disjunctive syllogism, dilemma, or cornute (which you know,

know, Sir, is the most barbarous and unchristian that can be invented by men of argument) he tells me after this inhuman and savage manner; either, says he, it is necessary that Greek and Latin should be learned or not. Now, for my part, fire or water: Burn or drown: I know not which to chuse. If I say not, then he has me most cruelly upon the hip, and brings me over with a most deadly gulph: For I, thinking nothing of this mischief, had gone, and foolishly said that there were very good books in Latin and Greek; and therefore seeing I cannot avoid it, I must say yes, though it be to the undoing of my wife and children. Yes, says he, then if necessary, those languages are to be learned at school, or not: Well, it is even as good to be undone at first as at last, I must say yes again. Very good! says the answerer; and now we have got you thus far; I proceed, and assume. Nay, think I, now I perceive, he intends to kill me alive; now come French, Spaniard, Turk, Tartar, or any devisable thing; for nothing, I am sure, can be so heathenish, and void of all grace as a cruel and blood-thirsty assumer: But I must be content, for on he goes; and to make an utter end of me, says, that if Greek and Latin are to be learned at school, then a good proficiency is there to be made, and

and if a good proficiency, then nothing but the mere words of the languages are to be studied. But I know, Sir, he will be ready to say that he does not conclude so; but I care not for that, for he must conclude so, if he intended to conclude against what I said: For I said nothing against the languages, but only that some other delightful employments might be mixed with them; and that a very competent skill therein, might possibly with more advantage be gained out of some other authors, than out of dictionaries, or janua's, which are not much better. A lad surely may bring up a little arithmetic and geometry (beside a good budget of Latin and Greek) without breaking the horses back, especially if his father's man comes but along with him. And as the answerer says, he has heard of fathers, councils, and the like; so I have heard there is a Greek Euclid; and that there be many Latin books, out of which knowledge, together with words, may be conveniently learned, but alas! now I think of it, old folkes will not give unto children any reason, for fear it should choak them. What give a child rank and surfeiting sense! It will breed worms, itch, kibed heels, and scabby heads. Children must have only water-gruel, scalded milk, bread and butter
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thin spread, and gayed, and easy digestible words. A triangle brings down the pin of the mouth, and a square, if it be any thing large, certainly inflames, and causes the quinsy. And, as the answerer says, (p. 37.) It is memory alone that is to be cherished and employed in lads ; that being the great store-house and foundation of all learning. Yet truly, it is so ; but for all that, I do not much approve, that a whole file of lads shall be all hanged up indifferently together for not being able in the same time to get, and repeat so many inches, or feet of words ; whereas perhaps some of them, having naturally but a small faculty that way, have as much reason to be whipped, because their hair is not curled and flaxen, or their eyes are not grey. And whatever sense the answerer may pretend is to be found in school-books to assist and help the memory, yet it is usually so undiscernable to lads, that you had as good set them to get by heart all the signs from Temple-bar to Westminster, as many tasks that they are oft-times obliged to.

And as for the business of Homer, if the answerer will promise me not to be angry, I will for once chuse rather to be of my Lord Bacon's opinion than his : who tells us in his advancement of learning, " That he can
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without any difficulty pronounce, that the fables of Homer (notwithstanding he has been made a kind of scripture by the later schools of the Grecians) had no such inwardness in his own meaning ; but however as the answerer well observes, there is somewhat else in Homer besides Achilles's toes. But I profess, Sir, my mind did so run upon the so often commended moveables of the captain (*πόδας ὠκύς*) that I might easily forget the buckle-garters. But is there nothing else in that ancient and venerable poet, but stories of footmenhip, and such like low accomplishments ? Was it not he that laid down the first elements of physic and surgery ; and gave the first glimpses for scraping of lint and spread plaisters upon leather ? is he to be undervalued, that is not only the most christian but most protestant of poets ; in whose works you may not only find all practical divinity, as fast as in the little book of piety itself ; but most cases of conscience warily resolved, and knotty controversies acutely decided ? is he to be called a rumbler, who glides as smooth as a star, or a fired rocket of tow ? who was not like common confined mortals, born at one dull place ; but at no less than seven the most eminent cities of the east ? is he, with whose works Alexander alone could take rest, when

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as the whole world besides could not content him : And who has been so solemnly quoted in all ages, and so generally relied on as the only standard of Grecian classicalness, to be compared with Garagantua, that was famous for nothing else but Torchchuls ! Alas, Sir, this is nothing to what might be found in Homer, if people were but diligent, and go but deep enough into the original. There is the Jesuits powder, that the world has made such a great stir about, lies so evidently in one place, that reading but the very verse with true accent, will almost cure an ordinary quartan : And again, there is the philosopher's-stone ; for which people have been groping so many ages : I could say somewhat concerning a certain long word in the second iliad, that would encourage an often frustrated philosopher, to call for his despairing bellows, and presently to blow up afresh. And indeed most of those rarities, which latter ages have counted themselves happy and ingenious in the finding out ; as the compass, printing, the circulation of the blood, and the like, are fundamentally all in Homer : and if people had not been lazy and distrustful, might have been long before brought to light, by a little help of Didimus and Eustathius.

And this puts me in mind of what I have heard so often said concerning his Latin brother, prince Virgil : namely, that if all arts and sciences were absolutely lost, burnt or sunk, and only Virgil left secure in the capital, they might be all most easily recovered out of him, by one that has but patience, a black eye, and a good commentator. In one corner of a verse lie very close all the secrets and several systems of astronomy : and though Ricciolus has seemed to search many authors for his curious observations, and to have spent many an hour in his ingenious contrivances : yet if you trace him home, and watch him but closely, you will find, Sir, that he is only a paraphrase of four or five pounds price, upon those bare fruitful words of the poet——*quo sidere terram*. From another small quantity of princely verse may be retrieved, if need should be, all the practical as well as fundamental laws of policy, and that Candia stood out twenty years, only by a right understanding of ——*Apibus quanta experientia parcis* ; keeping close to the letter ; and was afterwards taken by some idle, and looser interpretation of the same words ; there is nothing more plain, nay, Sir, I shall tell you a little further, what a nonconformist not long ago hinted to me, viz. That if the present

sent fathers of our church would but lay aside all ecclesiastical history, fathers, councils, and canons, he would undertake to draw up, out of the evangelical and prophetic writings of Virgil (as he called them) such a body of divinity and church-discipline as should exactly agree with the primitive doctrine and intentions of our Saviour; and more than that (giving me a private jogg) he was almost sure, that if this great poetical divine had lived in our days, he would have turned out at Bartholomew; for he found some notable insinuations in the author against the surplice, and renouncing the covenant. So that, Sir, upon further considerations, I must be forced to acknowledge, what the answerer says, (page 38.) that together with the fabulous part of poetry, there is a great deal of useful learning to be found.

But withal, Sir, I must beg leave to put in a caution or two, as to what was said a little before concerning Homer; and then not a word more of Homer all this year. And first of all, I have made some little enquiry, concerning Alexander's laying him under his pillow; and I find that the learned differ; some placing him only upon a stool by the bed-side, and others over his head upon a little ridge; the ancient manuscripts

not fully agreeing about *ὑπὸ* and *ὑπὲρ*; and as for Rablais, I shall not undertake for his being of the reformed religion; but as to divine mysteries, I think that Homer and he may equally pretend; and though comparisons are odious, yet I am somewhat forward to acknowledge that the mighty spirit of Garagantua declining the vulgar way of coming into the world, and cunningly crawling up the hollow vein, and so making his escape under his mother's ear, is not much inferior either for honour or strangeness, to that seven-city birth of Homer. I meet indeed sometimes with idle, extravagant people, that are so prophane as to compare his poems to Chevy-chase, but such I always check, shewing them plainly, that when the poet has a mind to recreate his readers to purpose, then by the elegant help of his little tickling *τές*, and *δες*, he could do it so effectually, that nothing ever came more delightful from the town of Athens. What more Theorbo-like, than *τὸν δ' ἡμεῖβει' ἔπειτα Πάτερ' ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε*. What more smooth and and coelestial, than *Σχοῖνόν τε, Σκῶλόν τε, πολὺ κνημόν' ἔτεωνόν*. But indeed, when the broad fides of poluphloisboio's, the pippodamio's and the poluscarthmoio's, are dreadfully discharged towards the upper end of the school, and the noise thereof come grumbling

bling down like a cart over a wooden bridge ; I will not say, but that a small lad or so, of a tender constitution, may chance to creep underneath the table. But to make an end, Sir, of this ; questionless there is a very peculiar and secret worth in several authors ; and if you want a bit of ancient authority, to plant classically upon the title-page of your book, there is none that is more fit, or has been more serviceable, than the worthy poet before-mentioned. Nay, so serviceable has he been in this kind, that I durst almost venture to say, that if he should by any misfortune be afterwards utterly lost he might be so far picked up by pieces out of title-pages, that there should scarce be wanting one *τ δ' ἀπομειβόμεν* ———

And thus having done with Greek and Latin, I shall now, Sir, follow the answerer to (p.39.) where he tells the world that if he would have made the worst construction of all things, (and indeed worse I think nobody could have made very easily) it is my opinion, that thirteen or fourteen years of age, is old enough for a boy to be dubbed a freshman in the university ; whereas I only said, it is but very low and slender diet, to live sixteen years upon the mere strength of words : But notwithstanding, that he hurries on in a most sharp confutation of me

cæteris paribus, as he did about Greek and Latin; but yet somewhat warily quoting by the way, Dr. Hamond, and another that were admitted into the university at thirteen and did well. Whereas, in that place, it never entered into my thoughts to consider to what years it was best to continue at school: But only, let the time be what it will, I thought that some of it possibly might be better spent. But the answerer does no more here, than in many places besides: for where the confutable matter grows scarce and thin, then he is for making some certain opinion for me; and having deputed me to say such and such words, he begs leave to suggest somewhat, (p. 40.) and then he falls with all vengeance upon that same poor opinion of his own devising, and knocks it, and bangs it to dust and ashes. And this humour is so powerful upon him, that within two or three pages he is at it again, viz. (p. 43.) It does not, says he, always necessarily follow, that rope-dancers in the school, prove jack-puddings in the pulpit. No, verily it does not; and I knew it very well: But that does not hinder, but that it may sometimes follow, or very often, or usually happen as I said (p. 33.) I pray, Sir, when you meet the answerer next, desire him to look a little better to his
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his words : He could not be content to put in always instead of usually ; but he must bind it, and ram it with necessarily ; saying, it does not always necessarily follow. I owe him, as I remember, a little curiosity, for treating me so barbarously about that same troublesome word whatever. - I wish withal my heart, that he had not said always for an old friend, an old acquaintance to say always ! and to put in necessarily besides ! It was certainly a most unhappy oversight. But then, I liked that which follows singularly well, *i. e.* having made me to say, that all that ever had been prevaricators and the like, did always necessarily prove triflers in the pulpit. There, says he, I think I have caught him bravely ; for I know some that never came there, and others that have ; who behave themselves very gravely and seriously. Yes, and so do I know several that have been courted, or forced to undertake those public places of wit, who are now in their several professions, as considerable persons as belong to our nation : But yet for all that, as I believe, that it was not quibbling which made them so considerable, so still I am apt to think, that such exercises do provoke slender-witted lads, to spend too much of their time in such trifles, who having no such tempting examples, nor hopes of applauded jests, might possibly have employed

ployed themselves in such studies, as might have made more for their own, as well as the world's advantage.

I wonder what the answerer counts worth the while, when he says, (p. 44.) he thought it worth his to add a supplement to those things which I had reckoned as causes of that ignorance that is in some of the clergy. I am not, Sir, ridiculously silly, as to say that nothing might be added: But yet in all sober sadness, the answerer must excuse me, if I say down-right, the accompt which I have given, does not at all appear imperfect, by any addition that he has made. For first of all, says he, I have skipped over the dulness of some mens natural parts. Surely those places were not rent out of my book, that tell him not only that a lad's parts ought to be guessed at, and oft-times might; but that discreet and wise physicians should also be consulted, before it should be determined that he should live by learning. I did not indeed give any particular directions that every lad before he was so determined, should take a certain purge; and according as that should be found to move the humours quicker or slower, so he should be resolved upon, as sprightful and apprehensive, or as dull and incapable: But excepting that one thing, all care was taken that any man (besides the unreasonable

unreasonable answerer) could possibly expect: But yet for all that, he says also, that I forgot the short stay, which some make at the university; which in truth, as he says I had great reason to have taken notice of, which I did, as I think, so plainly, that I know not how to have done it more, unless I should have got it engrossed upon vellum in great text hand, and have ordered every word to begin with a vast red letter. But these omissions of mine he hints at by the bye only: But (p. 45.) he pitches upon three very remarkable things, which he says, by my favour, he thinks I have not considered, and yet they are such as do much concur to the keeping of some of the clergy low in learning viz. want of books, want of time, and want of learned company. Now, Sir, if you remember, the answerer says, that he gave a shilling for my letter, and read it. But for my part, I profess I can scarce tell how to believe him; for he writes and answers, as if he had lived altogether at the Molucco islands, or, as he says of himself in his preface, like one that is out of the world of books, what can we do says he (p. 44) without books; unless learning were infused and inspired into us by a miracle? and again, what can we do with books, unless we had time to read them? Very right, and so said I: And I know

no difference, but only I say it in Michaelmas term, and he says it in Hillary. It is, Sir, to me a very strange thing, that the answerer should seem perfectly to forget what I said: and yet take the very same words, and print them and sell them for supplements and new discoveries at the King's arms in St. Paul's church-yard; which were sold three months before at the Angel in Cornhill.

And thus, Sir, I have in short considered what the answerer had said as to schools and the universities. It is time for him now to call me to an account concerning preaching. Which he does (page 53.) and the first of all he sets upon me with a charge general, for endeavouring to bring the whole office of preaching into contempt. I wonder that, when he was about it, he did not thrust it home, and accuse me of cutting off the late King's head; or that I had a design to burn all the bibles that were to be found; from the largest that lies on the desk, to the smallest Geneva; not leaving, if possible, so much as a psalter or primer in the whole land: And that to his knowledge I did intend to begin this antichristian work upon the first of June; that the billets most certainly were already provided; and that I had spoken for the brush-wood to be brought out

out of Kent. When people fall a gueſſing, I love they ſhould gueſs to ſome purpoſe. I hate all ſmall ambiguous ſurmifers: All quivering and mincing conjectures; give me the luſty, and bold thinker: who, when he undertakes to prophecy, does it punctually. “ You write, ſays the anſwerer, at that rate, as if you had a deſign to bring the whole office of preaching in contempt.” Who can tell, Sir, what my deſign was, but myſelf, any further than it may be judged by my words? Let every body deſign for himſelf: Why ſhould one man deſign for another? Would not the anſwerer think, Sir, that I were very frantick, if I ſhould tell him, that I beg his pardon; but in my opinion he writes after that rate, as if he had a deſign to diſparage himſelf and his profeſſion: Or, that he has managed his buſineſs ſo ſlenderly, as if he had hired him to ſet forth a mean anſwer; and thereby to build myſelf a reputation upon the weakneſs and miſtakes thereof. This, Sir, would look like a fly and ill-natured inſinuation: Or like one of thoſe ſame diſingenuous ſquints, with which, the anſwerer (page 57.) ſays my letter looks upon the clergy. But is it for certain that I am againſt all preaching? And that my deſign is to bring that holy exerciſe altogether into contempt? Might not ſome favourable and tender-

hearted man by no means be persuaded to think otherwise? No, by no means, says the answerer: For that I running through the whole method of preaching, he finds that I am against all prefaces, similitudes, divisions, mollifying sentences, Latin and Greek, flesh and fish, Mr. Dod, and all that is good.

And of all things, Sir, which trouble the answerer, I perceive nothing does it more, than that I should speak slightly and meanly of prefaces. “That seems, says he (p. 55.) to me that our very prefaces are slighted, and meanly spoken of: And if so, then farewell all religion, farewell church and steeple, farewell pulpit and cushion; what take away our dear prefaces! Can he be a well-wisher to preaching, who will not so much as let us begin our sermons? And can he be an encourager of hearing the word, that will not suffer the attention of the auditors to be prepared by a considerable preface? or a friend to the reading of the bible, that will not allow so much of the first of Genesis, as to make mention of Adam? what against prefaces! has he so little knowledge of the scriptures, as to forget St. Luke, the great evangelical orator? is he of no worth or example with him? Methinks the beginning of his gospel might have taught him more

more modesty and manners, than to be against prefaces; and is there any hurt to begin a sermon with Adam, seeing there is such a great affinity between the old testament and the new; and that many texts in the new do so plainly refer to the first Adam?" Yes truly, because it seems not convenient that the sermon upon Good Friday should have the same beginning with that upon Trinity Sunday; because I stinted them on this side Adam, and that too, when the text was in the revelations, saying nothing at all but they might begin at the flood, the captivity, or the like; because I knew it was the humour of some, to spend half the hour in beginning to begin their sermons, fetching their preface as far off as they could turn the bible backward: And lastly, because it seems reasonable that the people (as far as might be) should be instructed in all the several duties of their religion, and have the greatest and most useful parts of the scripture explained to them: Therefore am I against all prefaces. I wonder he did not conclude, that in my heart I was against Adam, Moses and the prophets; he might have done it as well, if he had but thought of it. St. Luke has a short and suitable preface of four verses, to his whole gospel, but begins neither with Adam nor Belshazzar; and you know, Sir,

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St. Chrysoftome, the orator of the church; has many volumes of homilies or sermons; but as I remember, there are very few prefaces taken from Adam; and yet you know, Sir, the new testament did as much refer to the old and first Adam, in St. Chrysoftom's days as in ours: The affinity being not much increased since: And if the answerer please to look, he shall there find the holy father to have prefaces proper and peculiar to the time, occasion, or subject of his discourse: And so have all orators, answerable to the matter they intend to speak. Tully, you know, Sir, and Demosthenes, were often called upon for speeches, but they knew how to prepare their auditors, without disturbing Romulus or Theseus; and yet you know, Sir, there was a very close reference between Cataline and Romulus; for Cataline should have burnt the very city of Rome, which Romulus had founded. But the orator thought it better to begin with *Quosque tandem*, than *Cogitandi Romulo*. And I believe his present majesty much wondered to what nation he was restored, when the rhetorical mayor welcomed him to his corporation with a long compliment derived from Adam. I am not, Sir, (God forbid that I should) against the answerer's putting into his prayer (for perhaps it may be part of it) that the words which he is to preach, may

may be as goads, and as nails fastened by the master of assemblies. But if he should begin every text in the bible with that very same preface (which he may equally do) I believe some idle people would say somewhat; I cannot certainly tell what. The answerer, Sir, invites me (page 52.) very kindly to hear him preach, and that if I will go over, he will give me one of the best of his sermons. But if I do, Sir, I think to send him word to desire him (for that day) to forbear Belshazzar; let him do all the year besides, as he thinks fit. I shall also take it for a favour, if he would not begin his sermon thus, "As Abraham sat in the tent door, and lifting up his eyes, and looking, behold three angels appeared before him; so if you please to stand with patience and expectation, you shall see me coming towards you in these three particulars." And, if with any convenience, he can dispense with it, I would beg of him, that he does not take that of Isaiah: *Come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price;* or if he does that he would not tell me, that his text is like a spiritual sack posset; for I was told so once, and I scarce ever loved sack-posset since. Possibly also I may obtain at his hands not to take that of the apostle

apostle to Timothy, *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief*; not but that it is a very good place of scripture: but it is a text that has been imagined just like a Christmas feast, consisting of three dishes; the first dish was to be commended for its soundness; this is a faithful saying: The second for its sweetness; it is worthy of all acceptation: And the third dish was a proposition, consisting of five ingredients. Now, Sir, if the answerer had had but the untwisting, the dressing, and the serving up of this luscious proposition, what a feast would the people then have had? what wonderful variety of subjects and predicates might this dish have afforded? How many choice and princely bits might have been here discovered? and how plentifully might it have been stuffed and larded with juicy Latin and Greek? A dish of propositions! I would go a mile to see, if it were but one simple one in a dish: and to consider, how puzzled the King's carver would be, to take of the subject from the predicate, without endangering the poor thin lurking copula. Now, I know, Sir, some are of such nice and fashionable stomachs, that common sense and truth will not down with them, unless

unless it be hashed and fricaseed; they must have their barricados of greedy desire, and escalados of virtue, and Christ must be the dauphin of heaven; but, for my part, I had rather have any plain and homely entertainment, so it be fresh and wholesome, than a whole platter full of such feasting prefaces, which with a little new garnishing, shall serve for Easter, Whitsuntide, and all the holydays in the year; for your propositions are a sort of diet, that will keep a long time in fowse-drink; if they do but now and then change the pickle, and take a new text.

I do not at all question, Sir, but that you knew very well before (as well as now) what that meant, which I said about prefaces. But I have very little hopes of the answerer's being so suddenly improved, as to understand me yet; who has given such late instances of his slowness before: But however, I proceed, Sir, to the business of dividing of texts: And what I said as to that in my former, was upon this account, namely, that it was a thing very easily to be observed, that many that went into holy orders, to inform and save men, spent too much of their time in logical ostentation, and nice division of their texts; and after such a manner, as they had very little authority:

authority for so doing, either in ancient holy writers, or in other good authors; of which, I believe, we may search a great many, before we can find any melting, dropping, or dissolving the matter that they intend to treat of. We are bluntly told by the orator, *Bonorum tria sunt genera*, and *Accusationis tres sunt partes*; and by Cæsar, *Gallia est omnis divisa* (not neatly and featly liquefacta) *in partes tres*: And I know how the king would take it, if they should tell him, that his dominions were to be melted into England, Scotland, &c. And notwithstanding the answerer thinks himself so plain and practical, when his text falls asunder into subject and prædicate, or into antecedent and consequent: yet for all that, I'll undertake if this be in a country village, he had better let down the tress of his text into the fore-horse and thiller; for they understand no subjects, and prædicates; only the King's subjects and the King's prædicates. They much mistake me (as the answerer did) that think I was ever any further against text-dividing, than either where it was not understood, or was not necessary.

I always thought that he that took that to the Corinthians for his text, *Sin not*, had much better have let it continue whole (it being but short) than to divide it into a *command*
and

and a *prohibition*; a *command*, *sin*; a *prohibition*, *not*. I have also sometimes thought, that their logical pains may be somewhat spared; who when there is no need of it, divide every thing (be it what it will) into affirmative and negative: For instance; it is said, Job 1. *There was a man in the land of Uz*: Homo non Lapis, *a man not a stone*: Homo non Lignum, *a man not a tree*: Homo non Leo, *a man not a beast*: And by the way, Sir, mind what poor *Lignum* and *Leo* are forced to signify for the letter sake. In like manner I thought him also in the late times a little too nice, and tender of his credit; and somewhat too profuse of his logic and rhetoric; who being to preach upon that of the Acts, *silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I unto thee*: Whenever he had named his text, desired the people, in all haste, to take the words not literally, but allusively, for that he had good store of money chinking in his pockets; besides what he left at home in his coffers. Doubtless a cautious foresight of following objections, and an early removing of the same, are great instances of wisdom and discretion; but he that taking that of Malachi concerning the *Son of righteousness*, &c. laboured most earnestly to convince the people, that it was not the *Moon* of

of righteousness; for the Moon shall be trodden under foot, Rev. 12. 1. And again he that shall tell us that *God was pleased to send his Son into the world, and not his daughter; or the like.* Such as these, I must needs confess, have somewhat too low apprehensions of the capacity of their hearers. He that undertakes to preach about repentance, or true religion; nothing certainly is more necessary and proper for him, than to let the people know, that they do not consist in looks, eyes, and noses; for such things with some are mistaken for godliness. But when the scripture tells us, *There was a man in the land of Uz; or that God was pleased to send his son; that any body should think that this man might chance to be a stone, or this son to be a daughter, is strange to conceive.*

We read that Christ opened the scriptures; and expounded out of them the things concerning himself. We read also upon what occasion it was that Felix trembled; and what a great number were converted (without predicaments) by one sermon of St. Peter. What the immediate successors of our Saviour and his disciples did; we have little left concerning their manner of preaching; though 'tis to be supposed that they spent their time in bringing people to the Christian faith; by expounding

pounding to the Jews the prophets, and convincing them that Christ was come; and by converting the Gentiles to religion that contained the best principles of life. What was done after the church was in some measure settled, and that the number which was received into orders, was so considerably increased, as that there might be, at least in cities and great towns, some continuing ecclesiastical person, may be best seen by such as were afterwards governors of particular churches; which, as we find, made it their business to confirm people in that faith which they had received; and to strengthen them to all good works; which they did by preaching against such heresies and errors as they found the people were apt to be carried into; and by fortifying them against such vices, as they perceived the time and place was most inclinable to: And that this was the manner of their holy employment, is very plain by St. Basil and St. Chrysostome, and many of the rest; where one may read a great many good sermons, but very few texts, or peculiar sentences of the bible pitched upon; much less so logically and metaphorically dressed, as some affect. I believe there were very few texts that melted and dropped asunder for the first five hundred years. Notwithstanding

standing (as the answerer observes) the scripture tells us, *My doctrine shall drop as the rain*; for they had the bible as well as we, and knew the meaning of that place as well as the answerer. But yet, for my part, I never was, nor yet am against a text being taken, or being divided; there being (as may be by and by mentioned) considerable conveniences in both; but yet one may presume to think, that it is much better only to say: Good people, we are met together this day in the name of God; and I do intend to exhort you to charity or temperance; or to convince you of the providence of God; and this I shall do (by God's help) according to the scriptures; than to take formally and solemnly some place of scripture where the word charity, temperance or providence is, and spend the whole time in logical cuts, metaphysical curiosities, and learned impertinencies. And hereupon, it may not be amiss, to take notice of what a very worthy clergyman observed: "There be, says he, two sorts of ministers that occasion their own contempt; the idle, negligent and careless, the other those who overdo, or do more than enough; such I mean, as affect nothing else, but quaint and curious phrases; or are unmeasurable in their quotations out of all authors

thors ecclesiastical and prophane; or soar aloft in unnecessary speculations far above the capacity of their auditors. These overdo, & *magno conatu magnas nugas*, take great pains, and eviscerate themselves, as it were, to weave a web, which when it is ended, is fit for no other use, but as an unprofitable thing to be swept away." The answerer perhaps would be apt to say, that it was some pert and self-conceited divine, that admiring his own style, and way of preaching, talks thus: Were it not that a very learned and reverend bishop did much admire, and solemnly commend his ingenuity, learning, worth and integrity. But to return; I say it is much better of the two, to follow the way of the homilies of our church, which are plain, practical, and may be understood by most; than to be so nice, critical, and scholastical, as few or nobody shall be the better.

But yet notwithstanding I am not of their mind; who thinking themselves the profound reasoners of the age, and the deep enterers into truth, do thereupon despise all taking of texts, and dividing thereof; those I mean, that for fashion sake, shall take you indeed, text after text; as if they would explain to you all the considerable mysteries of religion, and acquaint you
with

with all the encouragements that tend to a good life, that are to be found in the bible, and carry you through such a body of divinity; but the sermon, I thank you (except it be just the beginning) shall be very near the same; for a new text may be taken with that prudence and wariness, that the same sermon shall serve a man many a day; as suppose this Sunday, he takes that of St. Matthew, *My yoke is easy, and my burden is light*; about a month after, it is time possibly to take forth; and then he is for that of St. Paul to the Romans, viz. *Which is your reasonable service*: And a while after for that in the first Epistle of John: *And his commandments are not grievous*. Now, Sir, here is the craft of it; if they take texts suitable to the occasion, and divide them accordingly, they could not then for shame, and conscience, but meddle with one word or other that is there to be found. But if they read the text only in the whole, and take it between finger and thumb, and shew it plainly to the people, that it is a good text, a fair text, and that there is no deceit in the business; after the parish have had this general view, he may privately pocket it up again; and then for christian religion, and the excellencies thereof: Only this caution is to be observed, that if the text be in the

the

the new testament, any where between St. Matthew and the Revelations, then it is to be shewn that christian religion is much beyond the mosaical doctrine and dispensation; but for variety, if the text be in the old testament, then the case is altered; and you are to shew, that the mosaical doctrine is very far short of the christian. Nay, Sir, some there be that are so daring, that shall venture to take a text about swearing or adultery, as plain as can be picked, and as hopeful to bring forth a discourse of those subjects, as could be wished; and yet, for all that, with a little sly preface, shall draw you (before you be aware of it) into the old business of christian religion. Now, Sir, the next thing that the answerer has to do, is to take notice, that this looks like a disingenuous squint upon christian religion. Yes, Sir, he may so; and go on, and tell people, that it is my whole design to bring in the Turk; he may do it with as much conscience, as to report that I was against the whole method of preaching,

And as some are so bent upon preaching nothing but christian religion, as if Joseph of Arimathea was just newly come over; so others there be, that have their particular and darling notions which they will force

to be intended in almost every verse of the bible; for instance, one, suppose, having spent some considerable time, in studying the nature of original sin, and finding as he thinks, such wonderful things as were never plainly discovered before; hence is he presently so full of the secrets of original sin, that if the parish should join, and add sixpence more in the pound to his present tithes, they would scarce get a sermon about any thing else; You may set him to preach about the birth of our Saviour, his life, death, resurrection, ascension, or what you will, original sin is still the word for all that and this calls to mind what my Lord Bacon reckons a great hindrance to the advancement of learning, and of doing good in the world; viz. peoples addicting themselves to some one peculiar and beloved opinion; and so making all things of that, and bringing all things to that, they will suffer nothing else to be in the whole world: And thus Gilbertus having made some few and lucky experiments upon the loadstone, not usually observed before, presently writes a body of natural philosophy, and turns all the whole world into loadstones. Thus, Sir, sleep draws me to bed, and business pulls me out in the morning; affairs abroad draw me from home, and occasion at home draw me back

back again: And in short, man is born, lives, and dies by nothing else but magnetic attractions. And to conclude this, Sir, I cannot forget him who having at some time or other been suddenly cured of a little head-ach with a rosemary-posset, would scarce drink out of any thing but rosemary cans, cut his meat with a rosemary knife, and pick his teeth with a rosemary sprig: Nay, Sir, he was so strangely taken up with the excellencies of rosemary, that he would needs have the bible cleared of all other herbs, and only rosemary to be inserted. I think, Sir, (notwithstanding this digression) I am not far from my business; viz. That it is very convenient both for the minister and people, to be acquainted with variety of matter; and that it be delivered according as there shall be opportunity; seeing that after this manner are the homilies of our church most wisely and gravely composed; as also those of the ancient fathers: treating about the most considerable and different subjects in divinity.

Having now told you, Sir, in what sense I was against prefaces and divisions; I should now proceed to what follows: But because it seems, that the answerer having consulted his neighbours about their texts, found so few of them like any thing, I thought fit to

let him and you, Sir, know what abundance of likenesses (besides many other dainty things) I happened on in one little pretty sermon, called the wedding ring, fit for the finger ; or the salve of divinity on the sore of humanity. Do you perceive, Sir, he is got already upon the ropes, before he be past the title-page ; finger and fit ; salve and sore ; divinity and humanity. But to go on to the similitudes : The text itself, indeed, was only like the iron gate that opened to Peter of its own accord ; dividing itself into three parts ; and that is enough for any one text. But then as for man and wife, they should be like, or are like, all the two's that are to be found in the bible, or almost any where else. First husband and wife should be, as the two milch kine, which were coupled together to carry the Ark of God : or as two cherubims, that looked one upon another, and both upon the mercy-seat : or as the two tables of stone, on each of which was engraved the laws of God. But in some families, man and wife are like Jeremiah's two baskets of figs, one very good and the other very bad, or like fire and water : whilst one is flaming in devotion, the other is freezing in corruption. Husband to the wife is sometimes like a fore-horse in a team that will not draw : and the wife is
oft-times

oft-times to the husband as the ivy to the oak, for a certain bad reason there given : They should indeed be like two candles burning together, or like two fragrant flowers bound up in one nose-gay, or like two well tuned instruments : or, lastly, like two springs meeting. Again, or husband and wife are as a pair of oars, to row their children and servants to their desired haven : or like a cock and a hen both scraping together in the dust-heap, to pick up something for their little chickens : and they should be like the image in the looking-glass : or like an echo that returneth the voice it receiveth : or like any thing else. And thus much concerning likenesses. Now, Sir, if you be for flight of hand, you shall see as fair turns, as ever were shewn above-board. When man was made, the four elements were taken out of their elements : That is done as truly according to art as old Hiccius himself could have done. Again, he that made man and all the rest, made man over all the rest ; neat and cleaver as may be ! Though man had many creatures to serve him, yet he wanted a creature to solace him. Poor chuck, take a glass of sack, for keeping the letter so prettily ! Though men alone may be good, yet it is not good for man to be alone. Brave, I profess ! I think

we had best take him off ; for he will spoil himself, Where there is no generation, there can be no regeneration. Better and better, I think he improves ; he that made man meet for help, makes a meet help for man ; though man wants supply, yet man cannot supply his wants. But to conclude this pleasant gentleman : Though some have styled woman to be like clouds in the sky, yet a preacher should not be silent, for those who are silenced from preaching. If you have a mind, Sir, to see any more of this sanctified wit, you may have it in the none such christian professor in his meridian splendor.

And now, Sir, according to what I was about before, I go on concerning quotations out of learned languages : against which I said nothing, when it was either needful, or profitable : but to come crawling in with *Ne quid nimis*, or *Ignoti nulla cupido*, for pure Latin sake itself, is very insignificant to those that do not understand it, and not mightily rejoicing to those that do. But then suppose that which is quoted, be very proper, expounding, and elegant ; and out of the most primitive fathers ; Nay though it be out of the bible itself ; I now not to what purpose it is, where I am sure and certain nobody understands me ; for he that tells a
perfect

perfect ignorant parish, *Quorsum hæc perditio?* or *Faciamus hic tria Tabernacula*. If he be not very honest, may he not impose upon them *In nova fert animus*, to what purpose is this waste? or, *Arma virumque cano*; Let us make here three tabernacles; without the people discovering the bad translation: But I know the answerer is of opinion, that there is such a native and inexpressible richness in some words, that cannot be possibly rendered and communicated. Yes, there is so; a great richness and hidden treasure, and I suppose will continue so, where the people do not understand. Give a countryman one of the answerer's happily compounded words out of Plutarch, and you had as good give him a slice of a mill-stone or a corner of a brick. The answerer indeed that can relish, and is well acquainted with the haut goût of a long Greek word, may, as he says, do himself a kindness, and gratify his own understanding; but the poor unintelligent may sit with dry lips, and be starved for all Plutarch. But O, says he, (p. 64.) ignorant people ought not to be imposed upon; and if you should give them the English without the Latin, they might suspect you; and when you tell them it is St. Austin, they give great heed. And does not he think that they would be as attentive,

if he should baptize them, marry them, bury them, or do any thing else to them in Latin? nay, might he not excommunicate all such a parish, and make them smack their lips again, telling them it is a delicious and comfortable place out of the father? or give them to swallow down eight of the biggest curses in the bible, instead of the beatitudes? I do not question, but all this might be done.

We have now, Sir, very nigh done with preaching: I know nothing else that the answerer is still concerned for, but his little mollifying sentences: as it were, as I may so say, and with reverence be it spoken. And here I much admire that he did not quote that of Isaiah, we hide, as it were, our faces from him: or that in Leviticus, there is, as it were, a plague in the house, that I might have been utterly ruined, and confuted out of scripture itself. This would have been as proper, and destructive of what I meant, as his quoting against me that out of Deuteronomy, my doctrine shall drop as the rain. But if I must needs trouble the world in telling the answerer, who they were that I chiefly intended; they were those who in the late times (and have not as yet left it off) call themselves God's special saints. His favourites, and as I may so say) his intimado's but in reality were more Oliver's than God's.

God's. Those I meant, who reading of Jacob's wrestling with the Angel: and of coming boldly to the throne of grace: And being puffed up with all inward pride and religious self-conceit (which they called gifts and spiritual worth) were arrived to all possible degree of rudeness, immodesty, and almost blasphemy in their devotions and discourses of God. You may easily, Sir, know them by this doctrine, which some of them use to preach upon; viz. That it was the peculiar privilege and prerogative of saints, to be (as I may so say) faucy: And therefore, such as these, thinking themselves God's great assistants here upon earth, his special confidents, and (as I may so say) trustees of all affairs of religion: They would in their prayers and sermons tell God that they would be willing to be at any charge and trouble for him; and to do (as it were) any kindness for the Lord: The Lord might now trust them, and rely upon them, they should not fail him; they should not be unmindful of his business, his work should not stand still, nor his designs be neglected: They must needs say, that they have formerly received some favours from God, and have been (as it were) beholden to the Almighty; but they did not much question, but they should find some opportunity

tunity of making some amends, for those many good things, and (as I may so say) civilities, which they had received from him: Indeed, as for those that are weak in the faith, and are yet but babes in Christ, it is fit that such should keep at a distance from God, should kneel before him, and stand (as I may so say) cap in hand to the Almighty: But as for those that are strong in all gifts, and grown up in all grace, and are come to a fulness and ripeness (or as they might better say, to an impudence and sauciness) in the Lord Jesus, it is comely enough for them to take a great chair, and sit at the end of the table, and with their cocked hats on their heads, to say, God, we thought it not amiss to call upon thee this evening, and to let thee know how affairs stand; we have been very watchful, since we were last with thee, and things are in a very hopeful condition: We hope that thou wilt not forget us, for we are very thoughtful of thy concerns: We do some-what long to hear from thee; and if thou pleasest to give us such a thing (victory) we shall be (as I may so say) as good to thee in something else, when it lies in our way, &c. And thus you see, Sir, what frightful stuff I am forced to repeat, to bring a slack answerer to some little knowledge of what I meant by, as it were.

I am now, Sir, come to the last thing about which the answerer is not satisfied, viz. That supposing that the design of my letter was very honest, yet the manner of it is such as it will do more hurt than good. Which if it does, I can think but of two ways; either by encouraging the nonconformists, or by setting the laity more against the clergy. It is possible there may be some few people so lamentably deceived. If there be, they shall be considered by and by in that short part, which I intended to add, wherein the answerer will not be concerned: But in the mean time, we will see, what reason I have given them for any such mistake from what I have said.

First of all, says the answerer, the grounds and occasions of the contempt of the clergy, though it be not a text, yet it is a theme, a weighty and serious argument, and ought to have been handled accordingly; but the manner of my enquiry is too jocular, drol-ling and sportive, &c. To which I have in the first place to say, that although I think it not at all immodest to manifest my design the end of that being only to prove that I was, and am still very honest in the same; and likewise though it be allowable to endeavour to defend what I had written, this being only to signify, that it was not done

out of pure idleness and humour, but upon such reasons as might be further explained, when occasion should require : yet I must confess, I am not as yet come to that degree of self-conceit and confidence, as to recommend my own words, phrase and style ; and I had rather the answerer should find fault with the manner of my expression, and delight himself in thinking, that it is not suitable to the subject, than be guilty of so much folly and impudence, as vigorously to maintain or magnify the same : Only thus much, Sir, may possibly be believed by you, and perhaps by some few besides : that (as much a play as the answerer thinks my letter to be, let it be *ignoramus*, *Selden*, or any other play, I stand to his courtesy) I did not put in one idle and extravagant word, on purpose to render any of the clergy contemptible ; but did only just endeavour to keep people awake till they read it. But I pray, by the answerer's leave, who are they that think it too light and drolling ? I am afraid they are some that use to begin half their sermons in the year with *Belshazzar* or the like (though the text be not about tribulation, for then the answerer has learnt us to bring it in very well.) And I'll tell you why, Sir : I heard of a gentleman, that lives within a mile of an oak, who read over my letter ,

letter, approved of it very well (which is somewhat more than I should say, but let that go) liked its design, believed and hoped it might do good, and verily thought the author was innocent, and free from all bad intentions. It happened, that afterwards he calls to mind, that upon some odd time (it might possibly be in that great thaw the answerer makes mention of) his text dropt or melted asunder into its particulars: The gentleman presently takes the book, and beginning again, cries out aloud, fire, fire, heresy, rebellion; so that now you can no more get him near that book, than a colt to a windmill. Another also I heard of, who lives not far from another oak, who happening upon the foresaid letter, did in like manner read it, and was very reasonably contented, and thought most of it true: Afterwards he found it out, that he had married to a very true and literal Abigail. Hah! says he, what! are you there with your bears? Come, give me pen, ink and paper; it is all of it a most dangerous confounded lye, it is against both the universities, against both the houses of parliament, and against all the gentry and commonalty of the whole nation. But by chance, my cousin called him to bed, and he having slept, the book was pretty true again by next morning.

And

And I suppose, Sir, you have seen a book called the friendly debate, a book that shews a very honest author, be he who he will; but because he mixed a little pleasantness with his unanswerable proofs of the folly of his adversaries, hereupon presently must he be called a scoffer at religion, a droll upon all godliness, a doctor of the stage, and I know not what besides.

Now, Sir, for my part, I must confess, that I am no great weigher and measurer of words; I have but one rule, the end of which is only to be understood; and it is very likely, that when I had occasion to mention such toys and trifles, by the use of which ministers, do sometimes bring upon themselves contempt, that I did not then call for a great canopy and foot-cloth, and setting myself magnificently in the chair, with set rebuking countenance, and words as stiff as steel, speak to the eternal discouragement of pun or quibble; and then summoning together all the harsh metaphors, and idle similitudes of the country; bid them all be accursed, and for ever shun my presence; and whereas they pretend to be the glory of all sense, and joy of the understanding, tell them they are a company of empty rascals; and therefore let them all be gone. Perhaps this way
might

might have done, it is a hard matter to please every body. But, as the answerer hints, there is one part of my letter, that concerns the poverty of the clergy; a grave and tragical subject, which ought to be lamented, not insulted over. I know not how, Sir, to avoid his believing, that I do most mightily pride myself over the mean condition of some of the clergy, though I should tell him never so often, that the great design of my book was to wish, that there might be no such mean ones to be insulted over: And though I should let him know, that I am so far from any such unchristian humour, that there is none more willing to devote part of his estate for the raising of their revenue (if public authority should so think fit) than myself: But in the mean time what have you done, what have you propounded, says the answerer, towards this? Indeed I was not so light-headed, and fondly doating upon my undertaking, as to imagine that immediately after the printing of my letter, the parliament should resolve themselves into a grand committee, and forthwith consider of some present way of raising the revenue of the meaner sort of the clergy: But for all that, I am not so dead-hearted but to hope in time that ways may be thought of to bring about such a great blessing

bleffing to this nation; for howsoever de-
fpairing fome may be, yet I muft confeff,
it rejoices my heart more than a little, to
call to mind, how the bifhops have aug-
mented the vicarages in their gifts; and to
hear of feveral fums of money now em-
ployed towards the redeeming of the great
tythes, and to underftand that there be
many well difpofed people, that have al-
ready given back their impropriations to
the church; and that there be others, that
have made fuch purchafes, on purpofe fo
to fettle them afterwards; and above all,
to confider the great care and good incli-
nations of our prefent parliament towards
the church; who are not only highly watch-
ful to maintain the peace, and prefent
rights thereof, but feem to be as willing to
contribute towards the further profperity of
the fame. I have not indeed propounded
any way, as was faid before; but if you
look, Sir, into a learned author before-
mentioned, you will there fee a way pro-
pounded in the twentieth chapter of his late
treatife: And, in the mean time, I hope
I have faid nothing to abate the charity,
or good purpofes of pious benefactors; or
to ftop the affifting hands of our prefent
governors. And I perceive the answerer by
his letter, feems not to be much againft
what I have faid, but only does not ap-
prove of the manner of expreffion, and
would

would have had me to have pitied, lamented, and howled. Now, Sir, suppose instead of speaking my mind as I did, I should have covered myself with sackcloth, and besprinkled my head with ashes, and with mournful and sad countenance, and a long rope of onions (to carry on the work of crying) have taken a journey to visit the low condition of some of the clergy; and should have gone about with a bell and a tone as doleful as the man that uses to carry it; and have cried, alas! alas! poor gentleman, your house is ready to fall, and your glebe is very narrow, and somewhat short. Alas! alas! here take an onion, I am come to cry with you this evening, and to bewail your misfortunes, and mean circumstances. This is the way indeed to kill the poor minister before the following Sunday, and to make widows apace; but what good else it would do, I know not: Or perhaps the answerer would have had me to have drawn a scheme of a small benefice, and have demonstrated that a family of six or seven cannot be honourably maintained with twenty or thirty pounds a year; and so putting down A. and B. for the minister and his wife, three or four of the following letters for the children, and V. for the vicarage, have scientifically proved that A. B. C. and the rest that follow, would easily eat up, and wear out more than

than V. if they had it. Indeed, although I was not in all places thus mathematically grave and serious; yet, where it was needful, I was more confiderate than the answerer perhaps may imagine; and did not frame and devise more inconveniencies, than the world is sensible of; and where it was requisite, I reckoned up and well weighed all circumstances. Although I did not use a quadrant to take the height of every vicarage chimney, nor cast up exactly how many straws a diligent starling might carry away in a day, if the bird rose early in the morning. And notwithstanding the answerer thinks me so woefully and exceedingly hyperbolical, yet as to the number of yards of whipcord, and the dilapidation instruments, I was so very near the borders of strict, grammatical and sober truth, that I know a divine on this side the line, who was almost ready to set on another lock upon his study door, to secure his whipcord from that jesuitical plot, that he perceived my letter had against it: And, if need were, I could tell him of another, that thinks my letter wholly written against his filling the tumbrel, though there be some other things slyly put in to disguise the business; and many more such stories I could tell you: For you know, Sir, my manner

manner of life and profession oft-times calls me into company, where people (as sure as the answerer thinks he has got me) talk very freely of my letter, when they think the author is many miles off. And the other day, I was, Sir, in a place, where I heard that some people (besides the answerer) were angry, but for what, they professed they could not tell; and amongst the rest, I must be asked, whether I had observed any hurt in the book?

To which I answered (it not being convenient at that time to be modest) no verily, I saw none. Upon this, Sir, I began to think a little with myself upon what grounds any one should be dissatisfied; and I considered, that the things that I did represent as idle, useless, or blameable, are either in themselves really so, or not; if they be, and people be convinced thereof, it is far more manly and christian to abate or forsake them, than to be angry for nothing; but if so be I have undervalued expressions that are rich and precious, and disliked things that are very commendable or allowable, I suppose people are not such fools as to run after my idle fancy, and to fear my displeasure: Let them go on, I am mistaken, and there's an end of it. And he that thinks it his best and surest way al-
ways

ways to begin with Adam, let him, if he please, begin with the præadamites, I do not intend to quarrel. And he that judges it convenient and saving, to trifle and quibble in his sermon, let him do it also in his prayer (if he be so resolved) and to take along with him a pair of hawks bells, if the rubric will allow of it; I'll assure him I will not write against him, for I have done. In like manner, if any man be determined against being rich, and is offended at me for wishing him the great tythes, let him stay where he is; for I do not intend to get a writ to the sheriff, to force him into a better preferment; and if there be any one that will not have his dairy increased, but will dote upon the sweet society of his single cow, if he be so set upon her, let him take his pleasure still, and fetch her up daily, and sometimes kiss her (as the old woman did, when she said, every one as they like.) But in my opinion, a small laity boy, although he cannot reduce a syllogism, nor knows any thing at all of the first ten persecutions, may do the business as well, if she be not very curst and bad tempered. And if, after this, any body be still angry, let him hold off a little before he raves, and consider, that I am not so dainty mouthed, as that I must have discourses purposely

purposely provided for my own curiosity and squeamishness; because, Sir, you may very well remember, that what I hinted at in my former, were not things of my own disliking; but as I told you, were generally displeasing. And indeed, in my first letter, I did rather make it my business, to give a short history of what was derided or blamed, than study to invent or complain of what might be represented unprofitable or ridiculous.

And though the answerer may think, Sir, that I have made it my business ever since forty-two, to listen at church windows, or taking the pretence of my briefs to go amongst them; or to employ my diligent factors in several counties, or to ransack all the sermons that have been printed since the reformation, to get together as he says, (page 67.) twenty or thirty passages, not accurate or scholar-like, and to represent these with all possible disadvantage, to the disparagement of the clergy, yet he and the world may know, that this was so far from my employment or intentions, that I had quite finished what I designed in my first letter, before I thought it convenient to insert so much as any one story; and however harsh, unkind or disingenuous I have been before, yet I will now be so civil, as
not

not to say what little pains I was at, or how few books I searched into, to furnish myself with fit and proper instances to explain my meaning. And I cannot help it, if some of the politic (those I mean that are loth to part with some dearneffes or other that they use in their preaching) go along with the answerer in censuring what I did, as an untimely and unhopeful attempt: But I profess, I have so little skill in the nicety of seasons, and critical ripeness of books, that I know not of one line, but might be printed as well in seventy, as in seventy-one. If indeed what I said, had been some mighty secret of state, and known only to the privy council, the answerer and myself, we possibly out of our reaching prudence, and well-weighed determinations, had resolved not to declare as yet, but to lock up things, that ordinary tradesmen perceive and complain of, and that even children of ten years of age, observe and make sport with; is doubtless one of the great intrigues that spring forth from the very inwards of policy. I go suppose, to hear a sermon, where there be five hundred or a thousand people; and the minister out of imprudence, bad education, or some other misfortune, happens to think of very strange metaphors, or to make use of very bad tales, similitudes, or the like: Mum,
say

say I to myself, I intend to have all that, nobody else shall have one tittle of it : But perhaps, before the people get out of the church-yard, they begin to repeat ; and the secret that I designed for my own private censure, by the next morning is gotten all about the town. Or suppose I am acquainted with some of the clergy, whose condition is so very low and disconsolate, that they are forced to run up and down half the week, to procure a parish-meeting, to pick up or borrow three or four shillings : or are almost ready to pawn their bibles sometimes, to get a little of the answerer's that same, to go to market : This likewise by all means must be concealed, because of the answerer's old observation, all things that are true, are not to be said at all times.

And now, Sir, I was just going to say, that I had done with the answerer ; which could I say with a safe conscience, it were the happiest thing that I have said these twelve months ; but I must not scape so : For after I had spent the prime of my strength, and wasted my spirits amongst Greek and Latin, prefaces and divisions, metaphors and similitudes, and many other such like enemies ; up starts a fresh and dapper gentleman, called a postscript : Dear Sir, I know not whether ever I shall write
to

to you again ; therefore let me beg it of you for once, as you value your own reputation, your estate, your health, life and liberty, and the welfare of your relations, for the future beware of postscripts ; you never felt the sturdy blows, the sharp thrusts, and the deep wounds that such an adversary gives. I know, Sir, your temper inclines you to bold and great things, and it is not a letter, and a letter too, that can easily fright you : But yet I beg it once again, that you reckon a postscript the most dangerous of all after-claps. As for appendixes corollaries, supplements, conclusions, continuations, and such like small shot, these are not to be dreaded ; but when a letter comes tailed with a postscript, and concerning Abigail too, that akes you off just in the middle. What a fool was I, that I could not as well have put in Betty or Biddy, Susan or Sarah ; but must make the answerer angry, and put in Abigail ; or if I had put her in, what had I to do to trouble myself concerning the chaplain's sitting so close to her ? Is it to be expected that every gentleman should maintain two tables, to keep them at a distance ? or that he should keep a servant on purpose to watch private winks, treading upon toes, twitching of napkins, or breaking of merry thoughts underboard ? And

And is there any thing more natural, than for prettineſſes to beget looking, and for looking to beget admiration? and what if admiration and love together afterwards beget a vicarage? I hope a chaplain that has been true, truſty and ſerviceable, if preferment falls, may deſerve before a ſtranger. Well, I ſee I was a fool, and there is an end of it. But for all that, I believe the gentlemen have not as yet laid their ſwords in oil, nor trimmed up their firelocks, as the poſtſcript adviſes, for they have ſent me word that they love me, and underſtand me, and that the anſwerer is out of his wits.

With whom I am ſo perfectly tired, that I can ſcarce ſee his book, but that I am preſently ready to fall aſleep. He that miſunderſtands but now and then, or where there is any pretence or ground for it, is very pardonable; but to do it through and through, from his very preface to his poſtſcript; nay, even as far as Dr. Jegon's Verſes upon the Scholar of Bennet College, is ſo very extravagant and humourſome, that it is ſcarce to be endured; and for all this trouble that he has put me to, he thinks he hath made me abundant ſatiſfaction, in not quelling me, or in not dealing with me as ſome ſharp and ſevere anſwerer might have

done; but has (as he says, p. 83.) discoursed with me all this while as with a stranger, and has very little betrayed that he has any knowledge of me. Whereas had he not been very sparing and courteous, he could have blasted my credit, and for ever wounded my reputation: He could have told the world, "That my great grandfather, to his knowledge, was a very turbulent fellow in queen Elizabeth's reign; and did most heartily wish that the Spaniards might have succeeded in their invasion: That my great uncle by my mother's side, was supposed to have had an hand in the Gun-powder plot, upon some small prejudice that he had conceived against king James: That my nearest relations, in the late times, were most of them church-robbers, sequestrators, and excisemen; and that one of them in particular, was intimately acquainted with Bradshaw and Ireton; that I myself was born in the most quarrelsome and seditious town in all the nation; and that I would not suck of any body but a of peevish and schismatical nurse, nor eat any milk, but such as came from a kicking and ill-natured cow; that so soon as I could climb up a chair or stool, my only delight was to tear Bibles and all good books apieces; and afterwards (as I grew able)

able) to pull down the church-yard-pales to let in the hogs, to root out new buried people out of their graves; that I did not care for robbing any man's orchard, or plucking any man's geese, but the minister's; that I had a little one, privately out at nurse, by that time I was eighteen years of age; and that I gave five and sixpence a week, besides soap, starch, and candle; his name was Belfhazzar, and he had brown hair; and so on, and on I went, with constant and peculiar spite against ministers, till, to the discredit of our church, I writ the Contempt of the Clergy." After this sort, Sir, might the answerer have dealt with me, supposing he would have been severe, and taken notice that he was acquainted with me; but suppose, Sir, that his information fails him, and that the person he writes against, may either be of the house of commons, one of the life-guard, a builder of ships, or a high constable; then let me tell him, that if I be one of all those (which I am, for aught he does know, or ever shall know) that he has lost almost all the eighty-first page, and abundance more up and down his book: For whereas he there advises me to get a licence to be university preacher, to set up a running lecture, to call together the neighbouring

ministers, to learn them to preach without preface, division, inferences, or the like; it had been altogether as proper for him (unless he had known me better) to bid me cock my gun, prime my pan, face about to the right, or to have set me to any other employment, 'till he had been more sure, where I dwelt, or how I spent my time: For why should any trouble themselves to enquire after me, for I am very well, thank God, and wish all mankind so. But I know it is the humour of the answerer, and some few more, to believe things to be true and false, according to the author's age, bulk, profession, complexion, and country. Such a thing, says one, is as plain and evident as may be, if the author lives at London; but if at York, in my opinion he is somewhat obscure; and remove him but to Durham, and he is the greatest lyar in the world, next unto the huge one himself. Yes truly, says another, that may possibly be; nay, I can scarce see how it can be otherwise, if he were not so very fat and ancient; and for aught any body knows, the author is as thin as a wafer, and never did as yet see fifty.

But as I said before, Sir, I am quite tired, and have nothing more to say to the
answerer

answerer, but only to let him know, that had it not been for the sake of that little which is now to follow, I had been so rude and unmannerly to him, and so very kind to myself, as not to have taken any notice of what he had written. And indeed, before I go any further, I must solemnly beg pardon of every one that hath read his answer, for seeming so far to suspect their judgments, as to go about to point and direct to mistakes, that lie so thick and obvious; and having obtained that, Sir, I hope also, that where yourself, or any other reader, shall find yourselves very much grieved, with the trifling and small entertainment which this second letter only affords, that you will attribute some part of it to the slenderness of that stuff, which the answerer gave me to deal with, as well as to my great indiscretion in undertaking it. And so farewell answerer for this year, and all that shall follow.

And thus, Sir, I have briefly shewn, that as it was altogether against my design to bring any of the clergy into contempt, so I have said nothing, nor after such a manner, as should by any reasons be concluded to do the same; but if there be any so weak and so regardless as to mistake me; they are either some of the giddy and soft-headed non-conformists,

conformists, or some of the idle and inconsiderable laity.

As for the first, who think themselves the only saints of the age, and to be now in chains for Christ, and his cause ; let me tell them, that they have no reason at all to rejoice at my first letter, because they there find, that such is the imprudence or unhappiness of some of the clergy, as sometimes to occasion their own contempt. For if they please to examine again what is there written, they will then perceive their dear brethren to be as much concerned as any body else, and to have as great a share in those instances that are produced out of idle sermons : But I did not set them out by themselves upon two accounts ; First, because until they do conform, care is taking by authority, that they may not publicly render the ministry contemptible by their ridiculous preaching ; and in the next place, because all their fooleries, idlenesses, and insignificant canting, are so peculiarly and faithfully set forth in the forementioned friendly debates, that I could scarce think of any thing that could be added ; but, because those reasons I find were not sufficient, and that I hear that some of them say, it is now very plain, how the world is altered, and what lamentable preaching and trifling there is, now they
are

are silenced : Therefore, because I would not have them too much spoiled and exalted, in thinking themselves the only poor remain of people that can dispense the word profitably, and speak sense, rhetoric and godliness : they may please to believe it, that if I had thought they would have been so mistaken, I could have found out as many follies and extravagancies, in one day's time, out of their sermons and discourses, as in a week any where else. To tell stories, you know, Sir, is endless and tedious : but however, for once I must beg leave to be a little troublesome, that what I now said, somebody else may believe besides myself. There is therefore one now amongst them, who is counted one of their most precious sufferers, and a most healing instrument ; who is so full of idle fancies, metaphors, similitudes, and all such like frothy disparaging stuff ; that you may set him almost against twenty of the most imprudent conforming preachers, that are to be found amongst us. Of his rich vein of wit, I shall only give you one instance ; which is upon that of the Psalmist, But his delight is in the law of the Lord. Where he observes that every word has its emphasis, and therefore he begins with the first word, B U T. This B U T, says he, is full of spiritual wine ; we

will broach it, and taste a little, then proceed. He had better have said, it was full of spiritual cakes, or precious stones : For this *But* will hold no more wine than a net or a sieve; and one had as good go about to broach one of them, as this *But* : Or if he would have made the thing credible, he should have said, that this *But* is a hoghead full of spiritual wine ; (as one did that repeated it out of the author) then you know, Sir, it is as plain and possible as may be, and we might have broached presently : But of all things, I should have been most pleased, if for once he would have spoken in Latin ; and told us, that this *sed* or *verum, enimvero*, is full of spiritual wine ; for then the wit would have been more admired for lying a great way off. I suppose I need not go on, Sir ; you cannot but be sufficiently satisfied concerning the great stretch of his fancy. I might also, Sir, seeing that we have set him abroach (as he will have it) give you just a taste of his metaphorical faculty. What think you of a chest or cupboard of truth ? or of the rainbow of justice ? Mercy turns justice into a rainbow ; the rainbow is a bow indeed, but hath no arrow in it. Here the author was doubly happy, metaphor and wit into the bargain. Or what think you of sweeping the walks
of

of the heart ; or of prayer being a spiritual leach ; and of throwing in the angle of prayer, and fishing for mercy ? Or lastly, what think you of God's laying the soul a whitening ? Do you not think, Sir, that it would very much alter the countenance of the washmaid, to find two or three large souls bleaching amongst her linen ? But to speak the truth of it, the peculiar knack, gift and glory of this gentleman, consist chiefly in making of likenesses ; in which he is so lucky, and transcendently accomplished, that in a small treatise of his, called a Christian on the Mount ; in a very short, I found meditation to be like almost a hundred several things.

In the first place, meditation is like a withdrawing-room ; we are very well satisfied if he will not carry us much further ; then he calls us out to victuals, and after that, meditation is like chewing of the cud : now we must walk abroad, and meditation is like climbing up into a tree ; but if that be not high enough, it is like a mount or a high tower ; but if we have got any strain with climbing, meditation is like going into a bath : And if after bathing we grow hungry again and faint, meditation is the palate by which we feed ; and immediately after, it is like Israel's eating of manna : And five lines after, like a cordial to be drunk

down: So that in a very little compass, Meditation is climbing, bathing, tasting, eating, drinking, and chewing the cud: Within two or three pages after, the Christian is to take the air again, and to be mounted, but not so high as before, but upon a fiery steed; and then meditation is the Christian's curbing bit: and I know not well how it comes about, but it is also like a powerful loadstone; and for all that, the next line, it is like a cork to a net. And soon after, like distilling of waters, and like beating of incense; but now we go far and deep, meditation is like digging spiritual gold out of the mine of the promises; but we soon come above ground again for a little while, and meditation is like digging about the roots of a tree; but down again presently for meditation is like digging in the mine of ordinances. We had not been in this mine as yet, we had only digged in the mine of the promises before: But I am afraid, Sir, you will say you have enough: if not, we go on. And meditation is like the selvage, which keeps the cloth from ravelling: or like a hammer that drives the nail to the head; or like rubbing a man in a swoon: or like a bee sucking out of the flower of truth preacht, and working it in the hive of the heart. Furthermore, meditation is the ballast of the heart, the bellows of the affections;

affections ; and the hen, that hatches good affections : and like the sails of the ship, notwithstanding that it was like the ballast just now : But I suppose the author does not mean the same ship he meant before, but some other. But suffer me I pray, Sir, to put these grapes once more into the press (as an acquaintance of his says in a sermon;) meditation is like going to plough, like oil to the lamp, like a gun full of powder (but prayer without faith, is like a gun discharged without a bullet) like wet tinder, like a whip, like a prospective-glass, a golden ladder, a dove, a touchstone, a spiritual index. It was just now the oil, but he holds not long in the same mind, for now it is the lamp itself, that is to be fed with the oil of reading : but then join it with examination, and it is like the sun on the dial. And lastly, join it with practice, and it is like a pair of compasses.

And now, Sir, am I not as good as my word ? have I not shewn you a man, that is very fruitful and precious ? Is it possible to be weary, where there is such variety of fancy ? He begins with you at home, then calls you abroad ; brings you back again, then out at sea ; then for the Indies, carrying you into mines, several mines, promise mines and ordinance-mines ; this must needs be melting and dissolving. And I question not,

as this gentleman leads us through a great part of mechanic and natural philosophy, so had he thought of it, and been but a little more leisure, his fancy could have made meditation like all the animals in Gefner, and all the plants in Gerrard; for some small reason, or pretty report or other: for when his hand was in, what had it been for him to have said, that meditation is like an ostrich, a pheasant cock, or a robin red-breast; or like a whale, a pike, or a gudgeon? For I do not at all doubt but that a very small inventor may devise as good a reason for all those likenesses, as he that said, that faith was like a flounder, that laid a Christian flat upon the promises.

After him comes another Bartholomew gentleman, with a huge hamper of promises, and he falls a trading with his promises, and applying of promises, and resting upon promises, that we can hear of nothing but promises; which trade of promises he so ingrossed to himself, and those of his own congregation, that in the late times he would not so much as let his near kinsmen, the Presbyterians, have any dealing with the promises: And to forward this trade of promises, the poor deceived creatures must be lately abused with a new sort of Concordance, by V. P. consisting of commands, threatenings and promises; and besides, lest
people

people should take hold of, and apply a curse instead of a blessing, and a threatening instead of a promise, they are all set forth with their particular marks : So that now, I suppose, the trade of promises will suddenly hereupon be much amended, and grow strangely quick and lively. And to be short (because this gentleman has been sufficiently taken notice of, by a late worthy author) except it be idle preaching about experiences, dispensations, manifestations, discoveries, improvements, pledges, priviledges, and prerogatives ; out-goings, in-goings and returns, and such like senseless, insignificant, canting words and phrases ; there is scarce any thing to be found in him or any of those that are admirers of his way.

And, as this so much admired one has a peculiar trade in promises, so others there be, who are very much for trafficking with Christ : And in the late times, we may remember what a subtile trade was driven this way, and what a perfect merchandize they made of Christ, and what abundance of eminent holders forth of Christ and his cause were sent into the country to sell Christ for spoons, bodkins and thimbles : But amongst all those that were then employed, none ever was found to make so very good a return of Christ as H. P. was observed to do ; for he

he could presently call the people together, and tell them, “ That he heard at London, “ that they were without Christ, and he “ came on purpose to bring them Christ, “ and what a great deal of money he was “ offered upon the road for Christ, but he was “ resolved to part with Christ to nobody, “ till the beloved that he was preaching to “ had had the refusal of him ; and if they did “ intend to trade with him, they must “ down with their dust instantly : for to his “ knowledge, the Papists did offer a very “ vast sum of money for England’s Christ ; “ and therefore, if they did not make all “ possible haste, to send in their plate and “ jewels, he would be soon shipped, and “ carried away to Rome. But some may “ say, what if a cruel cavalier should come, “ would not then our Christ be in great “ danger, after all our cost and charges “ might not he plunder us of our Christ ! “ No : cavalier indeed is cruel, and may “ get away your shoulder of mutton, may “ get away your children, may get away “ your wife, and may get away your “ very Bible, and he may come also “ for your Christ, but he cannot get away “ your Christ ; for Christ is yours, and he “ is God’s ; and therefore down with your “ money. I do not say that all that were sent forth then to repeat the word Christ, (for that

that was then, and is still by many called preaching of Christ) did carry along with them such knavish intentions; but sure I am, that the vain repetition of such good words, is still too often that which the Non-conformists call powerful preaching; when as there is nothing at all that is meant by themselves, or can be understood by their hearers. And this made bishop Taylor say in his epistle to the reader, before his short catechism, that a plain catechism doth more instruct a soul, than a whole day's prate which some daily spit forth to bid men get Christ, and persecute his servants: for he was very well aware, that these great zealots that talk so much of Christ and his interest, were as forward to cheat, steal, or commit any villanies, as those that had never heard of Christ, or the doctrine that he preached: And indeed, I had now taken very little notice of what was then done amongst them, if that idle, empty and insignificant preaching had ceased with the times: but still I find people so studious to deceive, and so willing to be deceived, that such prattle amongst many still bears the name of the only saving, powerful, and edifying preaching. And indeed, though I will not accuse every one of that party, that now stand separated from us, of the utmost extravagancies of these follies; yet I am very
certain

certain, that the greatest part, or at least the most famous and prevailing amongst them, are so generally addicted to canting, insignificant phrases, and tedious tautologies, that should we compare their continual religious nonsense with the indiscretions of the Conformists, these would appear tolerably sober and wary rhetoricians.

And this is so plain from what has been already mentioned, that very little need to be said further; but only it happens that I have now by me, a book called Apples of Gold for Young Men and Young Women. a book so famous amongst them, that it has to my knowledge deceived the world to no less than eight editions; and yet when we look into it (notwithstanding the subject is very large and profitable) we shall there find little besides Christ, the soul, conscience, faith, and such like very good words, over and over repeated to very small purpose, and as often ushered in with an engaging and crying introduction, of ah! young men; and sometimes, ah! young men and women. It is all one Sir, where you open the book, his rhetorical humour is so very much the same. Ah! (says he, page 181) young men, young men, if you must needs be leaning, then lean upon precious promises, lean upon the rock that is higher than yourselves, lean upon the Lord Jesus Christ, as John did;
John

John leaned much (John xxi. 20.) and Christ loved him much : Ah ! lean upon Christ's wisdom, lean upon his power, lean upon his purse, lean upon his eye, lean upon his righteousness, lean upon his blood, lean upon his merit. Now, Sir, we well understand and know the meaning of Christ's wisdom, power, righteousness, and the like ; but to make a huge clattering of Christ, and a long empty tattle of leaning, and to make people sigh and cry by mere repetition of Scripture words, when perhaps there is little further sign of sense, than shaking of the head, and wringing of hands, has much more in it of popular deceit, than popular rhetoric : But having set out with the word lean, for the fine figurative noise and easiness together that is to be continued as long as lungs can hold, never minding to what it is joined, or how it is applied. And whence do you think, Sir, came all this idle rant about leaning ; only from John's being placed next to our Saviour at supper, and laying his head or elbow in his bosom ; therefore young men, if they would be leaning, they must run their heads into our Saviour's purse, and put their elbows into his eyes. And from this place of Scripture alone, arise all their insignificant canting about a believer's leaning and rolling upon Christ, it being

being no where else mentioned in the whole New Testament ; but only where it is said, that Jacob worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff. And as he here runs away with the word leaning : so the very same method he uses for any thing else, that he shall happen upon. It is said, you know Sir, *Mal. i. 14. Cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and yet offereth to the Lord a corrupt thing* ; upon which, immediately follow : Ah ! young men and women (who are like the almond tree) you have many males in your flocks, your strength is a male in the flock, your time is a male in the flock, your parts are a male in the flock, and your gifts are a male in the flock, &c. And whereas here he mentions only strength and parts in general, as being males in the flock, yet if his breath would have lasted, he could have made every finger and toe that a young man has, to be a male in the flock ; and I wonder how he missed judgment, memory, fancy, and the five senses, for these doubtless are all males in the flock ; if he had not forgot them. And this is that in which chiefly consist the power and edifyingness (as they call it) of their preaching, and by which they think themselves so far to excel the instructions of the conformable ministers ; as if these could not say the word Christ as often in an hour, as the most powerful and edifying

edifying of them : and I wonder where lies the mystery and great difficulty of this gifted sort of rhetoric. I am discoursing, suppose, about the pardon of sin, and I bring in that of the Psalmist, Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, &c. upon which occasion I exert my gifts, and pour forth thus. It is not, blessed is the honourable man, but blessed is the pardoned man ; it is not blessed is the rich man, but blessed is the pardoned man ; it is not blessed is the learned man, but blessed is the pardoned man ; it is not blessed is the politic man, but blessed is the pardoned man ; it is not blessed is the victorious man, but blessed is the pardoned man. Or I am preaching, suppose about remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, and I gush forth after this manner : Ah ! that young men and women would but in the morning of their youth seek, yea, seek early, seek diligently, seek primarily, seek unweariedly, this God, who is the greatest good ; the best good, the most desirable good ; who is a suitable good, a pure good, a satisfying good, a total good, and an eternal good. Now, may not a Conformist, though of an ordinary invention, and not endued with the sublimest giftednesses of our separatists, say, Seek, seek, seek, seek, &c. or Good, good, good, good, &c.

I am very serious, Sir, and you know it; and I wish those I am now speaking of would think so too, and lay aside their groundless pretences to gifts, and preach like men and Christians: for I bless Almighty God, I love all the world, and wish that all men were wise to the salvation of themselves and others. And notwithstanding that many of them are so forward to boast of their spiritual attainments and improvements, and will tell you, how often they have sweat at prayer, and how long they frequented ordinances, and what abundance of days they kept, and time they spent, in applying of promises, and registering experiences before they could arrive to this converting and heart-dissolving preaching; yet for all that, it favours so much of the natural man, that I question not at all, but that the very glory and heart-breakingness of it (which chiefly consist in an endless repetition of the same words) may be easily acquired by a lad of sixteen years of age in a month's time. To make, Sir, this plain, I'll give but one instance of very high improvements in this kind; it is upon this particular, *viz.* An old disciple, an old Christian is rich in spiritual experiences. Whereupon he thus proceeds: O the experiences that an old Christian hath of the ways

ways of God, of the workings of God, of the word of God, of the love of God! O the divine stories that an old Christian can tell of the power of the word, of the sweetness of the word, of the usefulness of the word! O the stories that he can tell you concerning the love of Christ, the blood of Christ, the offices of Christ, the merits of Christ, the righteousness, the graces of Christ, and the influences of Christ! O the stories that an old disciple can tell you of the in-dwellings of the spirit, of the operations of the spirit, of the teachings of the spirit, of the sealings of the spirit, of the witnessings of the spirit, and of the comforts and joys of the spirit! O the stories that an old christian can tell you of the evil of sin, of the bitterness of sin, the deceitfulness of sin, the prevalency of sin, and the happiness of the conquest over sin! O the stories that he can tell you of the snares of Satan, the devices of Satan, the temptations of Satan, the rage of Satan, the malice of Satan, the watchfulness of Satan, and the ways of triumphing over Satan! These you see, Sir, are stories which an old christian, and an old disciple can tell you. But do you not think, that one may procure a very young Christian, such as I before-mentioned, who by the help of two or three systems, and a little skill

skill in indexes, should be able to tell you as many divine stories as these, and a hundred more, if it should be convenient? May not he in a small time learn to begin with divine stories of God, the Scriptures, Christ, the Holy Ghost, of sin, of Satan; and may he not improve in the use of his system, and in time venture to run on, and tell you divine stories of the covenant of grace, of the sacraments, of the five points, of the ten commandments, or of any thing else with very great ease, according as he thinks to continue his divine stories.

I suppose, Sir, it were needless to go about to satisfy you further, that this gifted sort of preaching, that pretends more than ordinary to come from above, has as little in it of difficulty or miracle, as of profit. I cannot, I must confess, imagine wherein the powerfulness and inspiration of that gloss consisted, that is made by one of this party that I am now speaking of, concerning going out of ourselves, and saying, Come Lord, return: O Lord; not return. O my trade return: O return, O our ships return; not return. O our peace return; but return, O Lord, return O Lord. Nor of that which was made by another upon those words: The fear of the Lord is clean; clean within, and clean without; clean above, and clean below; clean

clean on the left hand, and clean on the right; clean on this side, clean on that, clean at home, and clean abroad. Now am I as sure as can be, that some of these people will presently cry out, and say, that I am against the fear of the Lord, and against Christ and his interest; and that I am against all soul-softening means, and all soul-melting means. And (as it is in the fore-mentioned apples of gold) I am a discourager of all that is God-ward, of all that is Christward, heaven-ward, and holiness-ward: and that I am for soul-hardning company, soul-hardning principles, and soul-hardning examples; and for suffering of people to go on in delusions, that are Christ-dethroning, and conscience-wasting, and soul-undoing opportunities. If they do, I cannot help it; but however, I bless Almighty God, that I was born of Christian parents, and that I was brought up in the Christian faith: and I hope, that by the divine assistance, I shall continue in the same, and in well doing to my life's end. And whatever opinion they may have of me I know not; but notwithstanding, I do most heartily wish, that such as have spent their time in reading of books and sermons about experiences, getting of Christ, and the like, would change them all away for the whole
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Duty of Man, that abounds with very pious and intelligible rules of godly living, and useful knowledge tending to salvation.

And I do wish, furthermore, that such of the nonconforming clergy that are of this humour, way and stile; that they would advise, or suffer, at least, such as are now, or have been heretofore their hearers and admirers, to read some other books besides their own, and hear some other men preach besides themselves: For as it has been already made out, that the way of their discourses is not so much above human industry and invention, as that it should require any more extraordinary assistances, or more peculiar illuminations, than the Conformists may have just reason to pretend to; so in good truth as confident as they are of the heavenliness, and convertingness (as they call it) of their method and expressions, they have very little grounds, or good authority, for that manner they proceed in. For, suppose they should be so full of themselves and their own endowments, as not to attend to the examples of the first famous Christians, saints, and primitive fathers, nor to the rules of the best and most judicious orators; yet if they will be either guided and persuaded by what our Saviour preached himself, or by those directions which he gave to
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his disciples for so doing ; they will find very little encouragement either to doat upon, and admire only their own proceedings, or so severely to censure and undervalue those that shew not all willingness to be deceived by them. And in the first place, we are plainly instructed, as to what our Saviour himself spoke, taught or preacht ; as well as after what manner he expressed his meaning. We very well remember what he said to the young man that enquired how he should attain eternal life. He did not say, get me, get fast hold of me, get your arms full of me ; but keep the commandments, and give away your estate ; which last in those times was necessary for such as intended to be disciples of Christ. In like manner, when the publicans and soldiers came to know what they should do ; he did not bid them, take hold of him, fasten upon him, and put their arms round about him ; but bade the first of them (whose employment might tempt them to cheating and bribery) exact no more than what the emperor demanded : And bade the others, be contented with their wages and pay ; and not do violence, plunder or steal. And it was well that it was Christ himself that said this, or else by chance (amongst these lofty teachers) this might have gone for gross, carnal

carnal reasoning, and for such dull moral instructions as Alexander or Cæsar themselves, that never believed any thing of Christ, might have given to their collectors and armies. By these places and the like, Sir, it is very easy to perceive after what manner our Saviour taught and preached; for whatever he spoke was preaching, although what he said upon the mount (being a more continued discourse) was more particularly called his sermon: So that thus far we see, that whilst Christ preached Christ, that is, of himself and his doctrine, here is not a word of getting of Christ, or getting into Christ, or getting a share, a stock, an interest in Christ, or any such like staring, and insignificant expressions. In the next place, let us see what order and instructions he gave to his disciples about their preaching; St. Mark tells us, Mark xvi. 15. That he bade them go into the world and preach the gospel, &c. St. Matthew tells us, Mat. xxviii. 19. 20. he bade them, go and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c. and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. Now, Sir, if there can be any other meaning of these last words, than that (after people were baptized or admitted into christianity) the disciples should spend their time in teaching and explaining

plaining such things as Christ himself had taught or preached to them, which were not such riddles, charms and tickling stuff as these people too often put upon their hearers, then (if his majesty will please to give me leave) I will promise never to come at any church again, so long as I can find out the least creeping conventicle: So that if these people will be either content to preach no loftier than our Saviour did himself, or as he appointed his disciples to do, I am sure they must not preach as they do now, unless they have got some secret reserve of gospels for their own peculiar use; or have received some new instructions and orders, since our Saviour was taken up; for in all the gospels which we are acquainted withal, we can find nothing else but that Christ was the Christ; and that God for the future would be worshipped after the manner therein declared. And he that preaches this, viz. what Christ did and suffered, and what he spoke, preaches Christ, or his gospel, or him crucified, or him and the resurrection, or the kingdom of God, or remission of sins, or the new covenant, or grace and mercy through Christ; all which, and many more, signify the same; and not he that thunders out Christ a thousand times in a sermon; saying, ah! none but Christ, none but Christ.

ah! none to Christ, none to Christ; no works to Christs, no duties, no services to Christs: no prayers, no tears to Christs: no righteousness, no holiness to Christs; lay out for Christ, make sure of Christ, close with Christ, cleave to Christ, unite with Christ, rest, lean, roll, tofs, tumble and wallow upon Christ. There is mention made (you know Sir,) Mat. xx. 20. of Christ being with the Apostles to the end of the world; which related to the divine assistance of the Holy Ghost, which they and their successors should have towards the propagating and continuing Christian religion in the world; but these people are for receiving love-letters from Christ, they are for strange intercourses, correspondences, returns, expresses, and I know not what. And, if it had not pleased God to have abated some of those extravagances, by restoring our Church, in time we should have come to heavenly proclamations, and heavenly Gazettes. And I well remember there was one amongst them that pretended to have got such an interest in Christ, and such exact knowledge of affairs above, that he could tell the people, that he had just before received an express from Christ Jesus concerning such a business, and that the ink was scarce

scarce dry upon the paper : At other times he would sink himself in the pulpit, and tell the people, he would be with them again presently, he would be with, he would only speak one word with Christ; and so pretending to have talked with Christ, he would come up again soon after, as full of Christ and his advice as might be. And to conclude this, Sir, how many hundred and hundred times have you heard that place in the Colossians, viz. Christ is all in all, brought in at the close of any thing that went before, only because it is melting, and may produce sigh or groan : for, if they would but consider of the Bible, as well as get by heart words and phrases out of it, they might then have taken notice of those many heavenly exhortations, contained in the same chapter to the Colossians, of living more peaceably, godlily and righteously than they had done, before they were converted to the Christian faith ; and in particular, that they should be now as kind, just and faithful to every man that they had to deal withal (let him be Greek or Jew, Barbarian or Scythian) as they use to be, or should be, to their own neighbours and citizens ; so that now, Christ was all in all, having taken away all distinctions, and made of all mankind one

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people. It is not, Sir, my intent here to comment upon scripture ; but I would to God, that these people that talk so much, and so endlessly the word Christ, would spend more time in explaining his doctrine; if they did, I am sure the world would not only be much wiser, but more peaceable and better.

And as I would not have these people count themselves the only godly and saving instructors by abundant saying over New Testament words ; so it is a very idle thing for them to endeavour to have their preaching believed more sanctified and searching, because they talk oftentimes concerning the Bible, giving only empty and loose commendations of the Scriptures in general. There are (thanks be to God) a great many Bibles in this nation : and though the Conformists do not possibly lay one in every window, yet their houses need not be supposed to be without the Scripture, nor themselves without the knowledge and use of them. And what if whilst they are in the pulpit, with finger thrust into the middle of the book, they do not brandish it up and down, as if they would discharge the whole of it together at some body's head ? What if they do not hold it forth with stretch-out arm and voice ; and cry aloud, this is the

the book, this is the book : Here it is, here it is ; no word like this word, no book like this book, no writing like this writing, no reading like reading here, no searching like searching here, no considering like considering here : Christ is here, Jesus Christ is here, the Lord Christ is here, the precious promises are here. Yes, doubtless (if it be a Bible) they are all there ; and so is Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and all the rest. But what is any body the better for this ? Who will read, search or consider one word the more for this empty amazing noise : or for such as that, which I find also in one of them : Search the scripture, study the scripture, dwell on the scripture, delight in the Scripture, treasure up the Scripture ; no wisdom to Scripture wisdom, no knowledge to Scripture knowledge, no experience to Scripture experiences, no comfort to Scripture comforts, no delights to Scripture delights, no convictions to Scripture convictions, no conversion to Scripture conversion. Let them shew us any where in Scripture (notwithstanding their extraordinary skill therein) where any thing is advised or commanded after this slothful and slight way. If they be for elegant composure of long periods, let them observe after what manner the acts

of the Apostles are recorded : if they be for shorter sentences, let them examine other parts of the holy Scriptures ; and if they would attempt to prophesy, let them read the prophets, and let them attend to that copious invention, as well as loftiness of expression that is contained in them. Surely, if they were not charmed with laziness, their own conceits, and a contempt of all that are not in their way and phrase, they would judge it better to explain to the people the principles of the Christian religion, and to give some sober directions of living well, and persuasive reasons to begin a good life, and proceed in the same, than to think that time only sanctimoniously laid out, that is spent in crying, here, here ; look, look ; see, see ; whereas there is nothing to be seen, but the outside of the book, nor any thing to be heard but a long string of words to the same purpose ; and yet this alone must be called flashing, holy violence, pressing upon, and breaking into the soul ; and all sober, discreet, and well examined instructions, earthly and heathenish.

Not less idle and extravagant is that humour of theirs, of loading their sermons with abundance of Scripture, where it is perfectly needless, and altogether impertinent. How far the true knowledge of one place depends upon

upon others, the rest of the world, that do not boast so much of Scripture, do very well understand : but to heap on Scripture after Scripture to no purpose at all ; but to make their followers Bibles stare again with turned down proofs, and the strings and clasps to groan with being overcharged with doubled leaves, is much too small foundation for them to call or think themselves the only true dispensers of the word of God. And that wherein the excellency of these mens humour may be plainly perceived, is this, that the less the quoted Scripture is really for their design (so it does but sound a little towards their meaning) the more it is admired, this arguing, long searching, and experimental skill in the Bible, and a more hidden and well digested art of applying of Scripture. I have a book, Sir, that teaches me how it is to be done upon that of St. Matthew ; blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Now, Sir, to bring in all those places of the Bible where the word pure is, may be done by a Scriptureless divine of ordinary concordance-parts ; but to stuff in plenty of Scripture occasionally, unexpectedly and wonderfully, is a peculiar privilege, and perfection of the godly.

The doctrine therefore must be this, that the saints of God are pure saints ; nothing

that is impure can see God, nothing that is impure can come to God, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb xi. 6. And again, Jude ver. 4. Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand——What! not unbelievers, but saints, pure saints: An unbeliever must not expect to be one of those ten thousand, he must not look to be one of that number; for he that expects to be one of that number must so number his days, that he may apply his heart to wisdom, Psal. xc. 12. he must be careful of his time, count up his time, and think upon every day; but especially the great day, the day of Judgment. For as the Psalmist has it, to day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness. And so, Sir, you may go on, with hear, voice, harden, heart; which you please. And this serves instead of telling you, what is meant by purity of heart, and what conversation fits a man for a vision and fruition of God.

And thus much I thought seasonable at present, to be said concerning the preaching of the Nonconformists; wherein I would not willingly be so mistaken, as to be thought to charge every one of them with that folly and frothiness that is above-mentioned; for

I must acknowledge, that I know several of them to be modest, serious and learned. But withal, I also know, that the small inconsiderable triflers, the coiners of new phrases; and drawers out of long godly words, the thick pourers out of texts of scripture, the mimical squeakers and bellowers, and the vain-glorious admirers only of themselves, and those of their own fashioned face and gesture: I know, I say, that such as these, shall with all possible zeal be followed and worshipped, shall have their bushels of China oranges, shall be solaced with all imaginable cordials, essentials and elixirs, and shall be rubbed down with Holland of ten shillings an ell; when as others of that party, much more sober and judicious, that can speak sense, and understand the scriptures, but less confident, and less censorious, shall scarce be invited to the fire side, or be presented with a couple of pippins, or a glass of small beer with brown sugar.

And as these people that are thus highly treated, have no reason to presume upon their parts, improvements, and extraordinary inspirations, because they can utter forth abundance of scripture words, of very good concern and signification, if they were soberly applied: so, in like manner,

it were very well if they would not altogether judge of the blessedness of their endeavours, by the tumult running after them, or because they find by experience, that they can force from people tears and sighs, and such outward signs of the hearts seeming to be affected; for all this and much more may questionless be done without either sense, oratory or religion; long sentences (such as before mentioned) rattled forth as fast and furiously as may be, with Christ, scripture, or the soul, every line; together with hands, shoulders and head devotionally managed, may be easily conceived to make weak and silly people gaze more, wet more, and wipe oftener, than any thing that our Saviour himself, or any of his apostles ever said. And this I know to be certainly true, because I have often seen people placed so far from the minister, that they could only see him make very concerned faces, and shew often the heavenly part of the eye, and might suppose by the great pains he took, that he was about business of very great weight and moment; and perhaps now and then, one single melting word loudly pronounced, might come down, and no more; and yet such as these weepingly inclined, should be as full of all outward expression of devotion,

tion, as if they were just then to be converted: and therefore I would not have them delude themselves, and think that their hearts weep at their pressing religion more home, and searching the hearts more thoroughly than others; but at the noise, the tone, and fierce repetition of words. And I think I am not at all uncharitable, if I say, that many poor undiscerning people, having oft-times so little grounds for being zealously moved, are as perfectly deceived as ever any body was, that took Sir Martin Mar-all's wide gaping, for melodious singing. And it is doubtless as easy a matter to make people cry and sob again, without doing them the least good, as it is to make a dottril stretch, or them yawn, without helping them towards heaven.

I have but one thing more to beg of these people; and that is, that they would not only cease to call their preaching alone spiritual, illuminating, and I know not what; but also that they would not think that they can, or ever did pray by the spirit: for till I see their children speak Hebrew at four years of age (which some say may come to pass, if they be brought up in a wood, and suck of a wolf) and themselves (without studying) all those languages that are mentioned in the second of
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the Acts, I shall never believe it ; but if they mean, they have several prayers of their own making, differing both in sense and phrase ; or that they do not place every word after the same manner ; but sometimes put Eternal before Almighty, sometimes Almighty before Eternal ; or that they do not always confess the same number of sins, but sometimes put in adultery and stealing too, sometimes adultery alone ; then is this so far from having any thing of the spirit in it (in that sense which they would pretend to) that it is no more extempore, than that this morning is read, blessed be the Lord God of Israel ; and to morrow, O be joyful in the lord all ye lands : or that sometimes we pray for rain, or fair weather ; sometimes for health or peace, according to our necessities : only with this difference, that this is printed, and by Act of Parliament, and what they say, is not. But suppose they come to that degree of confidence, as to begin at a venture ; and having a private method, a stock of Scripture phrases (to be brought in after any manner) with helpful ahs, hems, coughs, spittings, wipings ; and admitting besides rude expressions, improprieties, often repeated transitions (when invention fails) and the like, that they hold
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out their intended time : nay, furthermore, suppose they seldom or never say the same whole line, placed after the same manner ; and that they do not confess, that by reason of their solitary lives, they are as wanton as the falacious sparrow, nor pray unto God for syrup of barberries, nor desire the Lord to give that same ; and that they do not teach God Almighty how to defend the Trinity (as I have heard them do a quarter of an hour together) and how he is to distinguish between numerus numerans, and numerus numeratus ; and that the rheum does not fall down oppressingly upon the spirit and lungs, but that they proceed very clearly and smoothly ; yet still there need be nothing of such a sort of inspiration, which they mean ; for there being so many several words in the world, it is not at all impossible for a man (if he should so resolve and make it his business) never to speak the same whole sentence in all his life. And as for their saying, that they can plainly perceive a difference between a prayer that is framed, and one that is suddenly and spiritually poured forth ; I am so very unwilling to believe this, that if I do not procure a thin pale-faced hec, as rank a one as can be got in this town, that shares his time between swear-

swearing and cursing, and he shall be taught a long prayer, with a confession of all the villanies that have been committed on this side the line since the flood, and well filled also with such phrases and words as they delight in; and being doubled capped, and having well learned his tone and gestures, a meeting of these spirit discerners shall be called; and if this very small saint thus accomplished (supposing he does not put in sometimes an oath instead of, O Lord) does not wet as many handkerchiefs, and draw forth as deep and as many groans, as any of their greatest pretenders to illumination, then will I never hear Common Prayer again: for if I could tell where to hear people pray miraculously, it were very imprudent to run after, or listen to frail and mortal compositions.

And by the way, Sir, I would not have Papists please themselves too much (as I have heard they have done upon my first letter,) with an opinion of their own prudence and preaching abilities, notwithstanding those imperfections, which I so freely discovered amongst ourselves; for by what I find, by chance, in one of their sermons, concerning contrition, I perceive that they can persecute a metaphor until it be as ridiculous as people can possibly endure to hear it. It begins

gins thus. The Falcon when he has taken his prey, he desireth no more thereof but the heart, and therewith he is content; so our Lord Jesus, when he had ransomed us out of hell, he desireth no more but a meek and a contrite heart of us: Therefore as the Falconer, ere he will give the heart to his Falcon, first he will cut it, and then take out the blood and wash it: So must thou give thy heart to our Lord; first cut it with the knife of contrition, and then take out the blood of sin by confession, and after, wash with satisfaction: and so with the knife of his passion, cut your hearts and not your cloaths; having in mind that the blade of this knife was made of the spear's head and nails, that his precious body and heart was thrilled withal; the haft was made of the holy tree of the cross; and the wyrel was made of the crown of thorns that was about his head. Whet this knife on his blessed body, that so hard and cruelly was tormented on the cross; make also the sheath of thy knife, of the white skin of our Lord Jesus, that was painted with red bloody wounds; then with the cords that he was bound to the pillar, bind this knife to the girdle of thy heart; and I doubt not, be thy heart never so hard, it will begin to break. It is doubtless a very strange heart

heart indeed, that will not suddenly break all in pieces at the noise of such rhetoric. And whereas it has been observed, that some of our Clergy are sometimes over nice, in taking notice of the mere words that they find in texts; so these are so accurate, as to go to the very letters. As suppose, Sir, you are to give an exhortation to repentance, upon that of St. Matthew; repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. You must observe, that repent is a rich word, wherein every letter exhorts us to our duty: repent, R. readily; repent, E. earnestly; repent, P. presently: repent, E. effectually; repent, N. nationally; repent, T. thoroughly. Again, repent roaringly, eagerly, plentifully, heavily (because of h) notably, terribly; And why not, repent rarely, evenly, prettily, elegantly, neatly, rightly? And also why not A. Apple-pasty, B. baked it, C. cut it, D. divided it, E. eat it, F. fought for it, G. got it, &c. I had not time, Sir, to look any further into their way of preaching; but if I had, I am sure I should have found that they have no reason to despise our Church upon that account; and they cannot but see it themselves, if they do but look over and consider their own infirmities: And I would have them know, that what I said in my former, was not intended to help on their undervaluing

dervaluing us, but our own amendment.

And as much mistaken are the laity of this nation (which was the next thing I promised to speak of) if there be any of so mean a judgment, and so idly and wickedly bent as to think that I designed to encourage them in the contempt of our own clergy, being always so very far from promoting any such design, that there is no one in the world that ever was more sensible of the groundless and humourfome exceptions and prejudices, which some of those small and inconsiderable people have entertained against our clergy in general, than myself: into which, Sir, although in my former letter I did not think it requisite to enquire, by reason the intention of that was only to look into such things as to some few at least, besides myself, did seem to weaken the reputation and service of some of our clergy, yet in this second I judged it convenient to separate their foppish and unreasonable objections from such imprudences and misfortunes which I mentioned in my first.

And in the first place comes rattling home from the universities, the young pert Soph with his Atoms and Globuli; and as full of defiance and disdain of all country parsons, let them be never so learned and prudent, and as confident and magisterial, as if he had been prolocutor at the first council of Nice.

Nice. And he wonders very much that they will pretend to be gown-men, whereas he cannot see so much as Cartes's principles, nor Gassandus's syntagma lying upon the table; and that they are all so sottish and stupid, as not to sell all their libraries, and send presently away for a whole waggon full of new philosophy. I'll tell you, Sir, says one of these small whiflers, perhaps to a grave, sober and judicious divine; the university is strangely altered since you were there we are grown strangely inquisitive and ingenious. I pray, Sir, how went the business of motion in your days? we hold it all now to be violent. I hear your old dull friend Aristotle drowned himself, because he could not understand the flux and reflux of the sea; if he were now alive, and good for any thing, we could save his life. I can presently demonstrate to you how it is to be done, if you will but lend me pen and ink; and suppose but the motion of the earth, and two or three more things that I shall tell you. Yes, but for all that, this youth of so much worth, ingenuity, inquisitiveness and demonstration, may be very ignorant, and be very much a coxcomb, and have so little grounds to condemn so worthy a person, that if the gentleman please to carry him into his study, and shew

shew him his Plato, Plutarch, and some other of his Greek authors, the poor thing perhaps may find as much reason to hang himself, as Aristotle did for disposing himself otherwise: for he never stands to consider, that there be authors, such as Euclid, Tully, Plutarch, and many others that have been for many generations of constant fame, and are likely so to continue, when as we find that curiously laid hypotheses have their periods, and their credit much depends upon the humour of the world; and a country divine that is well skilled in those books (together with such as peculiarly belong to his profession) may deserve very good respect, and be of great use to the world; although he has not the convenience of every philosophical news-book, nor can call every spot in the moon by it's proper name, nor has a letter sent him of every new star that peeps into the world. But to proceed, Sir, upon Sunday the Searching young philosopher vouchsafes to go to church, the gentleman preaches concerning the resurrection, and having shewn what method his text directs him to observe, he teaches his people according to the scriptures that Christ did certainly rise from the dead, and that the same power is able to raise us also; and (although

though we shall have been long dead) to call together all the scattered parts of our bodies, and to make of these, glorified bodies. Very dull, says the young despiser; upon my word and knowledge very dull: What a good text was here spoiled, to divide it into this and that, and I know not what, when as it would have gone so easily into corpus and inane, or into three Cartesian elements? Besides, like an old dull philosopher, he quite forgot to suppose the motion of the vortexes upon which the grand business of the hypothesis of the resurrection altogether depends. But this it is to trust people with texts, that cannot tell what to do with them. How many brave opportunities did the minister lose of bringing in *materia subtilis*, and *materia secundi elementi*? If I had been in his place, I could have done it at least eight times: and then he must go and dronishly tell us, that the scattered parts of people that had been long buried and wasted, should upon the sound of the trumpet be all summoned together, &c. and never think to tell us, that the body which had been long absorpt in six foot of earth should break open the cortex of the grave; and freeing itself from the maculating dirt, the flat, the square, and the round particles should be all associated

associated; and combining themselves into a celestial and well concocted mass, should become a shining and fixed star of glory. And thus, Sir, he returns triumphantly to the college, not only very full of the vanquishment of the minister of the town, but also thoroughly confirmed in what he has so often heard; that all country-parsons, be they who they will, are the strangest and most mean things that belong to the earth. But why so fast, dear child? Is it impossible that the word parson, especially if you put country before it, should admit of any milder signification? And is it necessary that every man, though of very good worth and knowledge, if once he be settled out of the noise of the bells, and does not every day see the schools, should presently grow deaf and blind loose all his memory and parts, and general ignorance should suddenly surprize him, so soon as he moves his name off the tables? Perhaps it is but a report; and I do not apprehend but a gentleman may understand as well at Barnet, as at his lodgings in **Lincoln's-Inn-Fields**; neither does he find any such present decay and wasting of parts, so soon as his coach gets off the stones; nor such great improvements of himself, when he is coming down Highgate Hill.

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The next despiser of the clergy is the small Ingenioso or experimenteer; who having perhaps blown a glass, seen a paper-mill or a bell run, that knows within two houses where the best chymist in town dwells; and dined once where one of the Royal Society should have been; and looked another time into the door at Gresham, when the company was sitting: He comes down with a receipt of a miraculous sort of ginger-bread, with a little pot of double refined jessamy, and a box-full of specific perfumed lozenges, and a little licensed essence of orange, and he calls the minister and the chief of the parish together, and he falls to his ingenious tricks and operations, and freezes a dish to the stool by the fire side; sets up half a dozen tobacco-pipes, and then makes them fall into a mathematical astonishing figure: After this he desires to withdraw, and puts claret and beer together, and brings them out unmixed: and then he calls for a glass of water, and with some few words, and a wet finger, makes the glass first to fret and complain, and then the liquor to sparkle and foam; and they must be all fixed and wonder, and be alone must smile, as if he understood the reason. And so he rides up and down the country, and every town he comes at with a
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may-pole, he wonders what the Aristotelian parson and the people mean, that they do not presently cut it down, and set up such a one as is at Gresham college, or St. James's park ; and to what purpose is it to preach to people, and go about to save them, without a telescope, and glass for fleas. And for all this, perhaps this great undervaluer of the Clergy, and admirer of his own ingenuity, can scarce tell the difference between aqua fortis, and aqua vitæ, or between a pipkin, and a crucible, or a furnace, and a close-stool. And besides, he forgets to call to mind how many honourable and worthy Clergymen are now members of that Society (of which he knows no more, than merely to prattle) who have given so many and so large testimonies of their ingenuity, as do plainly shew, that one that is in canonical black, may look through as long a glass, and see as far into a mill-stone, as he that wears a light drugget : And it must not be denied, that a great part of what has been as yet, or is likely to be discovered amongst them, must be attributed to the diligence and quick-sightedness of ecclesiastical persons, as well as others. I know there be a great many, who foreseeing that it is much easier to undervalue and abuse knowledge, than attain

to it ; if they can but contrive a clearer tale, and charge it upon that Royal, Honourable and learned company, they reckon themselves presently much more ingenious than they that should happen to find out the longitude, or a perpetual motion ; but then let them cast up their stories, and perhaps they may find that the unordained part of that Society may have rid upon as many pacing saddles, have weighed as many pikes, and are as ready to save the charge of snuffers, as those that are in orders.

But still, Sir, there be more contemners behind ; for after these follows the young gentleman, newly entred into the modes and small accomplishments of the town ; who admiring himself in his morning-gown until about eleven of the clock, then it is time to think of setting the muff ; and if he chance to find out a new knot for fastening it, that day is very ingeniously spent. Then he walks three or four turns in his chamber, to make himself considerable ; and looking in the glass, and finding it so to be (having turned down a new place onward in Littleton) he stretches forth, and in approbation of his own worth, traloes himself down the stairs : Then at the gate, it is to be considered, where he shall eat ; after that,
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which of the Houses he shall go to ; and if he brings home a little of the prologue, and learns but two or three of the players names, his memory in the evening will be commended, and his improvements acknowledged. And as for this gentleman, he having nothing (poor heart) to say against the Clergyman, he combs his peruke at him : and though the weather be temperate he walks the room, and sweats very much against him ; and by way of objection, now and then propounds three or four steps of a corant ; and if he be so far entered into prophane, as to tell him, that he has brought him a new Psalm from London, and then gives him in writing a bawdy song ; he needs not be witty again all the time that he stays in the country.

But the great destroyers, Sir, are still to come ; for next appears the modish, grave, and well considering gentleman, that often calls himself to an account, and always finds himself full of weight and measure, but all the Clergy to be very light and contemptible for several reasons. And in the first place, he observes, that divines are a sort of people that mind only the inconsiderable things of this world ; they never take notice how this duke's or that lord's livery differs from ano-

ther; and they will idly suffer many a nobleman's coach to pass by, and never consider the thing that is behind, or whether they be horses or mares, English or Flanders. Which of them can tell the private passage out of Covent-garden, into---without asking at the barber's shop? or where the several ambassadors lodge; where they dined yesterday, and where they shall dine to-morrow? And then for the humour of the town, alas! Sir, there is not one divine of forty, that does or ever can understand any thing of it. How hard a matter is it to judge, whether it be best to dine at Speering's or to slide in afterwards; and what time of year and weather is most proper for the outward-room, and what for the inward? How much practical rhetoric is requisite to make a coachman fully believe, that he shall have a couple of shillings, and at the same time, resolve to let down the boot, and with a steady mind walk softly out to a coffee-house, a little before you come at your lodgings? Again, what accuracy of palate and breeding is necessary to have a clear apprehension of a mighty and lofty dish; and to do reverence and strict justice to a glass of Florence, Champagne, Frontiniac, Bourdeaux, Languedoc, Flascon de vin. vin de Burgogne

gne, vin de prefforage, vin pare, vin de parole and taffalette : and to begin small princes with a loach, and to end the emperors with a neat's tongue ? Be not deceived, Sir, it is not logic, metaphysics, fathers and councils, and all the rest that ever can expect to know or do these things, or half of them. Besides, if we consider the great rudenesses that are oft-times by Clergymen committed, in barbarous managing of a hat, immoral picking of teeth, uncouth and unfashionable sneezing, clownish pronouncing of words, that should have been gracefully lisped, and rude and flat setting both feet upon the ground, when one should have stood in tittering readiness upon the toe for a congee : when we consider, I say, these and five and fifty thousand things more, we must plainly conclude, that it is only for great head-pieces, and men of birth and education, of prudence, and a mighty reach, to pretend to honour and reputation ; not for poor unobserving book-men that go in black. Then, to all this must be added, the vast skill that is required to the tendering a visit, with approved and modish accuracy ; that it be done punctually at the critical minute, neither before nor after ; that the servant that comes to the door be duly spoken to, ac-

according to the rule provided in that great affair : that the goloshoes be left in their true and proper place, that the foot-boy be expert in observing his tutored distance, that he gives allowance for summer and winter ; and that he never stands exactly behind, but bearing a respectful point or so, north or south of his master. Then having got over all these difficulties, and made suitable address, there is further to be weighed, whether the visit is to be a silent visit, or a speaking one ; and if any thing is to be said, whether the visiter is first to open, or to expect until discourse be offered ; and when, and in what order the health of the family is to be inquired into. Lack-a-day ! says one of the accomplished, in what a lamentable condition I have seen a mortal Clergyman, when he has asked for a son or a daughter that has been dead a month ; whereas he should have felt out all those things by degrees, and never have run himself into the danger of a stumbling excuse, for not knowing of it before ; how will his pulling conscience be put to it, to rap out presently half a dozen twingers to get off cleverly ? But still, Sir, there be many things behind : It is no such easy matter, upon my word, to judge how much of the handkerchief shall hang out of the

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the coat pocket, and how to poise it exactly with the tortoise-shell comb on the other side: and if there be a peruke to be ordered, where is the man of the church that can tell when it is to be done to Old Simon the king, and when, After the pangs of a desperate lover? Heavens and stars! It is such a task to be considerable, and of any moment in the world, that it would almost crack the brains of the most steady clergyman, but to hear repeated all the accomplishments that are required to make up a man of worth. But then suppose a divine of extraordinary parts and quickness, and that has got, I know not whence, so much of our modish blood in his veins, as to apprehend, in some low degree, what makes men for ever blessed, and should arrive to some set forms of being acceptable; how will they make shift for speeches and compliments, passes and repasses, parties and reparties? Put the case, Sir, that a fair lady or person of honour, by some chance or other, drops a glove or handkerchief; Where is now, say they, your man in orders, that can presently snatch it up in an extasy, deliver it with bonne grace, and instantly say something suitable to so great and sudden occasion? Nay, furthermore, suppose we should give them

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some of the grounds and elements of our being immortal, and lay down before them some of those inestimable principles, by which we become excellent and admirable in the eyes of men, women and children; and should discover to them some of our several vows to God, as I am a sinner, Madam; as I hope for mercy, Madam; as I beg your pardon, Madam: As also some of our raptures and heights, as I am a sinner before God and your ladyship; as I hope to find mercy in heaven, and in your ladyship's breast; as I desire to commit myself to God and your ladyship's disposal; as I desire to observe only Moses's and your ladyship's commands. Nay, to all this should we throw in some of our gentle and very helpful words; as, intrigue, harangue, obligation, devotion, altars, shrines, sacrifices, gustos, flambos, contrastos, and Orlandos Ferdinandos: I say, suppose a tender-hearted gallant, having a little pity and compassion for the low condition and style of the Clergy, should unbosom and reveal himself after this free and open manner, yet still black is black; for there is so so much of native gentility in the just use and nicking of these things, and so much of mystery in the right humouring of a fashionable word, that there is
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but very small hopes that any Clergyman should be ever happy or valuable in this life. But still, Sir, we forget the great business of mankind, the writing of letters: Where is the divine that can do it, either to mistress or friend, as a man that knows the world, the humour of the town, and that has lived upon, eat and read men? And suppose we should bestow upon a poor low thinking black coat, one of our best forms, such as follows; it is five to one he would commit some ecclesiastical blunder or other, in setting his name too near, or in the folding or making it up.

Most bright and transcendental Madam,

I Presume by the intercession of this coarse and erroneous paper, to arrive at your fair and infallible fingers; and to pay the utmost tribute of my devotion at the high altar of your perfections. The great concern, Madam, of my life, now, is only to sacrifice the poor remains of it to your intrigues, and to make all my interests and inclinations to be observant of your commands, and to do homage at the shrine of your virtues. Nay, Madam, I am in some curiosity, whether I be above or this side the heaven's canopy; for no sooner was I beamed upon by your shining ladyship, but I seemed presently to be altogether taken up. The delicacies of the palate are to me grown all insipid; and it is the contemplation, Madam, of your glories alone, in which I can find any satisfying gusto. In fine, Madam, were there not hopes of seeing once more your angelical self, and receiving some benediction from the flames of your eyes, I could presently resolve to commence blindness; and were it not for the oriental
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fumes that come from your breath, it should not be long before I put a period to my own. Should I, Madam, go about to make an harangue answerable to all those jewels that lie from your eye-lids to your fingers-ends, it must be as lofty as Teneriffe, and as long as the equinoctial line : and therefore instead of that, I have nothing else to prostrate at your feet the everlasting disposal of,

Madam,

The most devoted of all your vassals,

And the meanest of your foot-stools.

Alas ! alas ! a clergyman must not expect to write thus ; his blood is so low and creeping, that it can never be inflamed to this pitch of passion and expression, with all the loveliness in the world. Now, Sir, would it not vex any creature upon earth, to see trifles and feathers, knots of ribbon, cringes, visits and devoirs, a few fashionable words and phrases, and a form or two of a fantastic letter, and a very little besides, to undervalue charity and piety, real worth,

and substantial knowledge, only because it is in black, and the name of it is a divine?

I have nothing more, Sir, to say to these people, only it would be a delightful thing if any of them upon what I now said, should mistake me as thoroughly as the Answerer did about Greek and Latin, Prefaces and Divisions, Patrons and Chaplains; and presently cry out, that I am against all meat and drink, gustos and flambos, altars and sacrifices, feathers and garters, perukes and goloshoes, head and heels, body and soul of the laity: for I suppose, notwithstanding any thing that I have said, a man may put on a new suit twice a week, eat and drink of the best he can procure, have all his fashionable dressings, and modish attendants, and yet be modest and discreet, and not think it any vast breach of elegance, to toss his head at a clergyman, because his hair may be shorter, nor to despise him to dirt, because he is constantly obliged to the same canonical habit.

But this last, Sir, that I was just before speaking of, is but a vow to God; man, a great looker over his shoulder; a silent and moderate despiser of all ecclesiastical persons; that only professes by his troth, and
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as he is a gentleman and a sinner, that there is nothing in nature to be found so altogether ignorant of human affairs, and so empty and inconsiderable as a clergyman; for after him comes the tearer and confounder of all that belongs to divinity; that troubles not himself to reason out the point, whether a person in orders may not possibly understand as much, speak and write as well, and do as much service in a nation as others; but to make it all sure and short, swears it home, that they are all of them a company of mean and undiscerning people. Now, Sir, what great judges these are, and by what measures they proceed; and how likely they are to be very severe discerners of what is worthy, and what is not, may be easily seen by those deadly witty arts they make use of to disparage that holy profession; and by which also they would raise themselves the reputation of men of parts and wit: And the first thing wherein they are so severe and satyrical, is upon their names and habits. And you may soon see, Sir, the portion of wit that is amongst some of them, and the smallness of their objections; when to say, There goes a black coat, shall be reckoned a very good and special fancy;

or to say, Here is to you parson, or, good morrow parson; if the word parson be humourfomely and flurringly pronounced, (as some of them can do it) if well considered, is a very notable abuse. And I'll warrant you, that arch blade that looked upon a married minister, and asked him how Mrs. Parson did, thought himself in little less than a rapture; and it was well, if he did not presently go to bed, and take a dose of diacodium. But if a Clergyman chance to meet an Old Testament wit, and that he sets into his tricks and drollings; then he must expect to be called Levite: And that you may not think his fancy to be stinted, sometimes he calls him Tribe, sometimes Leviticus, and for variety sake, at other times, Numbers. I need not, Sir, go about to commend these, they having been so often approved. But of all the wags, and sly ones, that thus play upon a Clergyman, he certainly is most dreaded, that calls him doctor; which if it be spoken with the utmost keenness of intention which that word may admit of, it goes the deepest into the bones of any thing that can be said. I cannot forget (before fashes and broad hats came into fashion) how much I have seen a small puny

puny wit delight in himself, and how horribly he has thought to have abused a divine, only in twisting the ends of his girdle, and asking him the price of his brimmer: But that fancy is not altogether so considerable now as it has been in former ages.

Another witty way they have of undervaluing this profession is, that they will not go to church: as if a man of a very ordinary reach and fancy might not stay at home; or if they do go, they will spend their time in talking and laughing, when there is no occasion at all for it, nor reason to do it: For as I was concerned in my former, (and also in some part of this) that there should be such discourses uttered by some, as might tempt the people to abuse and slight the preacher; so I am as much concerned now, that there should be such idle, foppish, and extravagant people, that should undervalue the whole profession of the clergy at a venture, from the highest to the meanest; let their carriage and behaviour be in all circumstances grave and unblameable, and let their sermons be as serious, judicious, learned and profitable, as pen can write; for although it be to no purpose to deny, that by reason of
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the unhappy education of some, the low condition of others, and the wilful miscarriages of a third sort, many of our Clergy are often slighted and disregarded; yet on the other side, it is nothing but perfect madness, ignorance and stupidity, not to acknowledge that the present Church of England affords as considerable scholars, and as solid and eloquent preachers, as are any where to be found in the whole Christian world. And if these people would but a little examine themselves, and not count every oath, curse, abuse of Scripture, and the like, for wit, humour, judgment, and every thing, they would find themselves not so wonderfully overstocked with ingenuity and knowledge, as utterly to despair of receiving from the pulpit any useful advice and information. And I have oft-times much wondered, that such as make so great pretences to wit and accomplishments, should pitch upon so easy a method of being admired, and valuable in this world; when as they see, that the grounds upon which they endeavour to be so famous and illustrious, are so presently apprehended, that the low-born coachmen, carmen and porters, are come to as great perfection as the loftiest of

of these speakers. That certainly was a pretty attentive child, who, as he was lighting himself home upon a Saturday night (after his work was over) was heard to say over, and fought all the oaths and curses that he had learned in the whole week, from his ingenious and eloquent masters. And I cannot but approve of the modesty of that youngster, who being highly pleased with that excellent fancy, *viz.* Son of a whore; and not happening conveniently of tapster or drawer to spend himself first upon, was forced to break his mind to an oyster-woman; and so being once entered, the youth soon improved; for afterwards, if the candle burnt not clear, or the pipe had a crack in it, or his horse stumbled, or dog or bitch lay in his way, they were all sons of whores. Nay, if a trial in Westminster-hall goes not right, the very case itself is a son of a whore case; and that purge that gripes, or gives a stool more than ordinary, is a son of a whore purge. I know, Sir, that these huffing despisers of all black coats think they urge very hard for the necessity of their thundering and terrifying style; by saying, that the degenerate part of the world, were it not for that, would grow
faucy

faucy and unmanageable; and the unworthy and mean spirited creepers would make no difference between themselves and the brave and bold commanders of the age. Curse (say they) the groom or ostler three or four times lustily, just before you go to bed, and your horse will very near cast his coat, and begin to shine by the morning; and give a drawer half a dozen granadoes as he goes down the stairs, and if he be so irreligious as to bring you up any thing but true terse, you will for certain shortly hear that he has murdered his master, and hanged himself with his own garters. In short, Sir, were not people quickened to duty and observance, by such brisk and remarkable expressions, the world must suddenly end, and the very gentry of the nation would be as much neglected and disobeyed, as we find the modest and cowardly Clergy now to be. Indeed, it is great pity, but that gentlefolks should be duly revered, and attended upon. But, I was thinking, Sir, (supposing swearing and cursing be so very necessary to the standing government and a welfare of a nation) that a small instrument (about the statue of Puginello) might possibly be

be so contrived with two rows of stops, one for swearing, and another for cursing, that might upon all occasions express itself with as much discretion, propriety and elegance, as the very owner of the little tool should be able to do himself. But then indeed, Sir, as to the extemporary and occasional wit that is oft-times shewn in abusing the Holy Scriptures, that must never be attempted by such a gentleman of wainscot, but must be performed by human mouth itself; for there is so much of suddenness of apprehension, and experimental skill in the application of Scripture, that is requisite to that business; that to go about to perform it by holes, springs, or wires, would be much more difficult and chargeable, than Paradise, or Sands's Waterworks. For suppose, Sir, a gentleman going to dinner to — — house, and walking through the narrow alley, mistakes his way; then, Sir, what engine upon the sudden, of wood, or pasteboard, (but gentleman himself) could presently say, Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it. Do you see, Sir, how hard it is! There is not such a place again for that occasion, and for that very particular alley

alley in all the Bible. Well, Sir, he proceeds, and coming at last to the great house, he knocks at the gate, and the porter being not just at hand, then comes out that of the Psalmist, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, &c.* Upon which, the porter hearing such great wit and divinity at the gate, presently runs, and opens; the gentleman enters, and there finds a servant sweeping; then comes very properly that of the prophet, concerning the besom of destruction: For indeed, what more exactly like the desolation of Babylon, than the sweeping away a little dirt out of a court-yard? After this he walks into the hall, where he happens upon the butler, and two jests; Good morrow Pharaoh, says he, (for you know, Sir, Pharaoh had a butler) where is your master, Pilate? for you know also, Sir, that our Saviour was carried into the common hall. Where by the way, Sir, you must observe, that a true wit is as good in the inside of the house, as at the gate. Dinner time draws nigh, and soon after the victuals appear: The gentleman is desired to sit down: No, he shrugs, and begs pardon: having read, that the first shall be last, and the last shall be first; and then

then he shrugs again. However, at last, Sir, we fall to ; and amongst other good things, there is somewhat that requires mustard ; upon that he desires his neighbour to remove a little of the mountain to him ; for if ye have faith like a grain of mustard-feed, ye shall remove mountains. By and by, Sir, half a dozen chickens are brought in ; which presently he commends for a dish of very fat jerusalems ; because of, O Jerufalem, Jerufalem, thou that killest, &c. though if he had pleased, he might as well have called them a dish of prophets, or a dish of would-nots : for you know, Sir, Jerufalem, prophets, chickens, and would not, are all in the same verse. In short, Sir, my lord-mayor himself cannot provide a greater number of dishes, than this gentleman shall have always in readiness divine fancies ; nor less ingenious can he shew himself to be in his return (if there be occasion) than he was in his coming ; for a child cannot drop before him in the streets, but presently, Tabitha, arise ; be it boy or girl ; nor a porter ease himself of his burden, but, Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden, &c. nor a water-bearer be at the conduit, but, Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, &c. I know

know not, Sir, how many there be of this sort of people in the world, who have nothing to say against a priest, but only to swear more than ordinary in his company, or to apply a few Scripture-words, with impudent nonsense. If there be no such at all, then what I have now said, belongs perhaps to those that dwell at the moon. But if there be, I would to God, that (in the mean time, 'till they come to some sense of religion) they would in some measure consult their own credit and reputation; of which, if they be so nice and tender, as upon all occasions they pretend to be, they might plainly perceive, that this their childish way of scoffing at God and his immediate servants, is so far from leading towards wit or honour, that it is nothing else but dry, blunt, infacetious atheism.

And seeing, Sir, we have been now speaking of some that think themselves the very princes of the age and wit, it may not be amiss to hint also at other more modest sort of people, who are not for such notorious scoffing at God, and swearing down towers and steeples; but yet having but a small opinion of religion, and little regard to honesty and conscience; (wit
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and humour serving instead of that) they must needs undervalue, and laugh at all such whose duty and serious employment it is to explain the Scriptures; and from thence to exhort to all meekness, temperance, and righteousness; those, I mean, who, if they can but cheat a little boy of his link and livelihood; blow out a poor man's candle, and make him prick his fingers; beat down a basket-full of the biggest apples, pawn a young gentleman for the reckoning, and then call it by the right name; they are in their own opinions very much wiser than all the grave and formal clergymen in the nation; who are commonly so very dull as to think that one that is in the prime of his fancy, invention, gayness, frolick, and achievements, should submit to set forms, and to eat drink, and walk the streets by canon.

Now, Sir, I must needs say, suppose a very ancient and solemn professor of cobbling be very intent upon the great business of reparation, and all things promising highly well; the awl glides nimbly through, the candle consents, and burns very clear; nothing of fear, cloud, or disappointment appears; but he sings or thrums

thrums at the great likelihood of the restoration of the shoe; seeing nothing but that the evening may close well, his sleep be undisturbed, and his endeavours be crowned with being paid next morning; on a sudden, Sir, rushes upon him darkness, despair, and a sprightly gallant; that spoils all his hopes, shatters his tune, and in short, with one puff, blows out every bit of his burning candle, and blossoming designs. Now, I say, this was very well blown; for if cobblers should not sometimes be frustrated in their plots and contrivances, but should always succeed in their brisk and jolly humour, without disturbance or interruption; they might in time come to disrespect the great masters of fancy, and place too much confidence in the old shoe part of the world. But for all that this great and just dissembler may go to Church next Sunday; and give due respect and attendance to his instructor, notwithstanding he did so utterly defeat the cobbler. I also deny not, but that he that in the evening lets in the air at three or four windows may possibly keep people from sleeping too securely, and preserve their houses from being afterwards burnt. But suppose a divine has a
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mind to walk right on to his lodgings, and not to make such remarks and observations in his passage ; there is no reason that he presently should be counted a senseless sot, and others the only wits and humourists of the age. For you know, Sir, if the night be very dark, and people be but fast asleep ; windows, commonly so called, are very frail, and frangible things ; and they will easily give way to a cudgel, though clownishly and unhumourfomely applied ; as well as if directed by the most ingenious and frolicksome hand : Whereupon I say again, as we ought to take special care, that we do not set too low an esteem upon these enterprizes ; so on the other side, not so to overvalue them, as to think but that our forefathers possibly might have attempted something in this great kind : And therefore if the Minister, in his sermon, gives sober rules and advice to live peaceably and modestly, and to make satisfaction for offences committed, he may with much more reason be believed, and listened to, than wondered, or laughed at ; for the jest is never a whit the less, though the glass be paid for. I have also (according as my occasions would permit) taken into some consideration, that great af-

fair of apple-spilling. And I am thinking, Sir, if the basket stands a little leaning against the wall, or sloping upon a board, and that the apples be very round, and the surprize be very sudden, and that the meditating governess be very old, stiff, or lame; I do then verily believe that much of the lamented fruit may get into the kennel, before it can possibly be recovered. But suppose there be not such great advantages to make all things thus easily hopeful, and yet that the contrivance is such, that the humour takes, and the frolic succeeds; however let us behave ourselves with some calmness and moderation, and not as if we had killed a giant, or slew the dragon. I must therefore always confess, that I did more than a little admire at the smooth and even temper of that gentleman, who finding a pail of Islington milk standing all alone at the door, and pouring it out every drop into the street, went on as unconcerned about his business, as if he had done nothing but washed his hands that day; whereas if such a special opportunity had fallen into some other humourist's hands, who was apt to overplume himself upon such enterprizes; he would have run presently back, to have told it at his lodgings; have counted him-
self

self as great a wit as Ben Johnson, Fletcher, Beaumont; and have utterly despised all the starched humourless black-coats for six weeks after, because of the great adventure of the milk.

If I were at leisure, Sir, I might also briefly mention another sort of more shrewd and judicious despisers: who have a very strange opinion of religion, Scripture, and the Clergy. But they profess it not out of humour, frolic, or any prejudice; but that they have looked far back into the history of the world, observed the rise and decay of kingdoms, consulted the laws and inclinations of human nature, and have very well weighed and examined the nicest circumstances, and possibility of things; and hereupon do very much wonder, that such thinking creatures as men, should be so long deluded with bugbears and tales; and the groundless traditions of the mistaken and imposing priests. And I need not, I suppose, Sir, tell you, that these are the disciples of Mr. Hobbs. And what strict weighers, and punctual examiners of things these are like to be, you may very near guess, by the easiness of their conversion to his doctrine and opinions: One he comes, and says, he is very confident that Mr. Hobbs is a gentleman,

and a great discoverer of truth ; for he hears of several very accomplished and creditable persons, that do very much admire the old gentleman, and are close adherers to his principles ; and therefore he is resolved to be a fine person too ; and to be as accomplished and creditable as they ; and to believe all, say all, and admire all, that they believe, say, and admire ; so soon as any body would be so kind as to tell him any one thing that Mr. Hobbs holds ; for if he could but get it once by the end, let him alone for the improving and management of it : Another says, he is altogether as sure that all the world is in a mistake, except Mr. Hobbs and his followers ; for that he was lately at a Meeting, where a friend of his asserted right down atheism to the very teeth of a Clergyman ; or, that if there were any God at all, it must be a kind of wooden god, such as Mr. Hobbs's god : And he knows this friend of his to be so much a gentleman, and of so much integrity and consideration, that he would scorn to say any such thing, if he had not well examined it, and found reason to conclude so ; and therefore for his part, he shall take his word and judgment concerning the business of a God, before any methodical priest that dotes upon his Bible. Yes, says a third, Mr. Hobbs's

Hobb's philosophy is certainly the only philosophy ; he must needs be a brave man : I durst almost swear, says he, that what he holds is absolutely true, let it be about what it will ; or else such a one would never have shewn so much ill breeding, and encouraged so much error, as to begin his health with such ceremony and observance. If it please the fates, the next company I come into, I'll put it about, two in a hand, upon my word, and it shall run, To Mr. Hobbs, and the utter confutation of all spirits and spiritual men ; and so he is sufficiently entered, and fast enough. O, by all means, says a fourth, Mr. Hobbs must needs be in the right : I'll pawn half my estate upon it, that he is : he shall dispute with all the ecclesiasticals for a hundred pounds of my money. For he perceives now where the pinch of the business lies ; for he has worn him above this half year in his pocket, day and night, and has above twenty places of moment turned down ; some before, and some after the candle was out. O, says he, how ignorant, and deadly cold am I, if by chance I leave him at home ; he is a great deal more comfortable and warm than a squirrel in the sleeve. But if you happen upon one that has worn the philosopher so long, that

two

two or three of his phrases are got through his pocket, and at last have insinuated themselves into his temper; he proves presently a chairman in all companies: And if he looks but upon a Clergyman, he is as great a prince as ever Mr. Hobbs gave power to. Then, come Sir? says he, Come now for your immaterial substances; have you ever a one about you, Sir? I hear that you are much acquainted with them; you live by the spirit, Sir; it is a wonder that you should not have one in your pocket: I have got honest material Mr. Hobbs in mine. I could shew you for a need, Sir, spirit of wine, spirit of salt, or spirit of hartshorn; but I have enquired, and never could get, or see any spirit of substance, spirit of substance! that's fine indeed. What, essence of essence? pretty I profess. Indeed we have had a very curious time of it, a company of very seeing priests, and searching philosophers; that should go on, and teach one another such plain, palpable, and manifest contradictions. Ask them how such an effect comes to pass; it is done, say they, by an incorporeal substance. Wonderfully acute indeed! that is, by nobody, or by a nobody body, or by a nothing thing. It was very well for this nation, that Mr. Hobbs

Hobbs was born at last ; and half a dozen of us, of willingness and parts, to understand him, otherwise the world had continued in a brave blind condition. It is not, Sir, to my purpose, at present, to meddle with, or examine their masters principles : But I much wonder, seeing they may be daily convinced how much he has been mistaken in his mathematical attempts, that they should take his bare word, and believe him not to be failing in his other writings ; because he confidently says he proceeds by evident connexion and demonstration. And whereas heretofore it was a work of many years study and seriousness, that could entitle one but to be suspected of Atheism ; now he that has but seen Mr. Hobbs's boots, and can make but a mouse-trap, is as fully privileged as if he could pluck up the earth by the roots, or make a man.

I believe, Sir, there may be several others that without any reason at all are ill affected towards the Clergy. One thinks that whatever episcopacy be, yet the lands thereunto belonging are not *jure divino* ; another is of opinion that the Clergy must by no means ride ; because they are to go, and teach all nations. And others there be, who are therefore against tythes, because they think they

they give them. But these were partly mentioned in my former; and if they were not, it is all one; for I can say no more at present, being suddenly sent for into Devonshire; where I expect to find such employment, as will certainly secure the world, from me being ever troublesome in this kind again. I am, once more,

S I R,

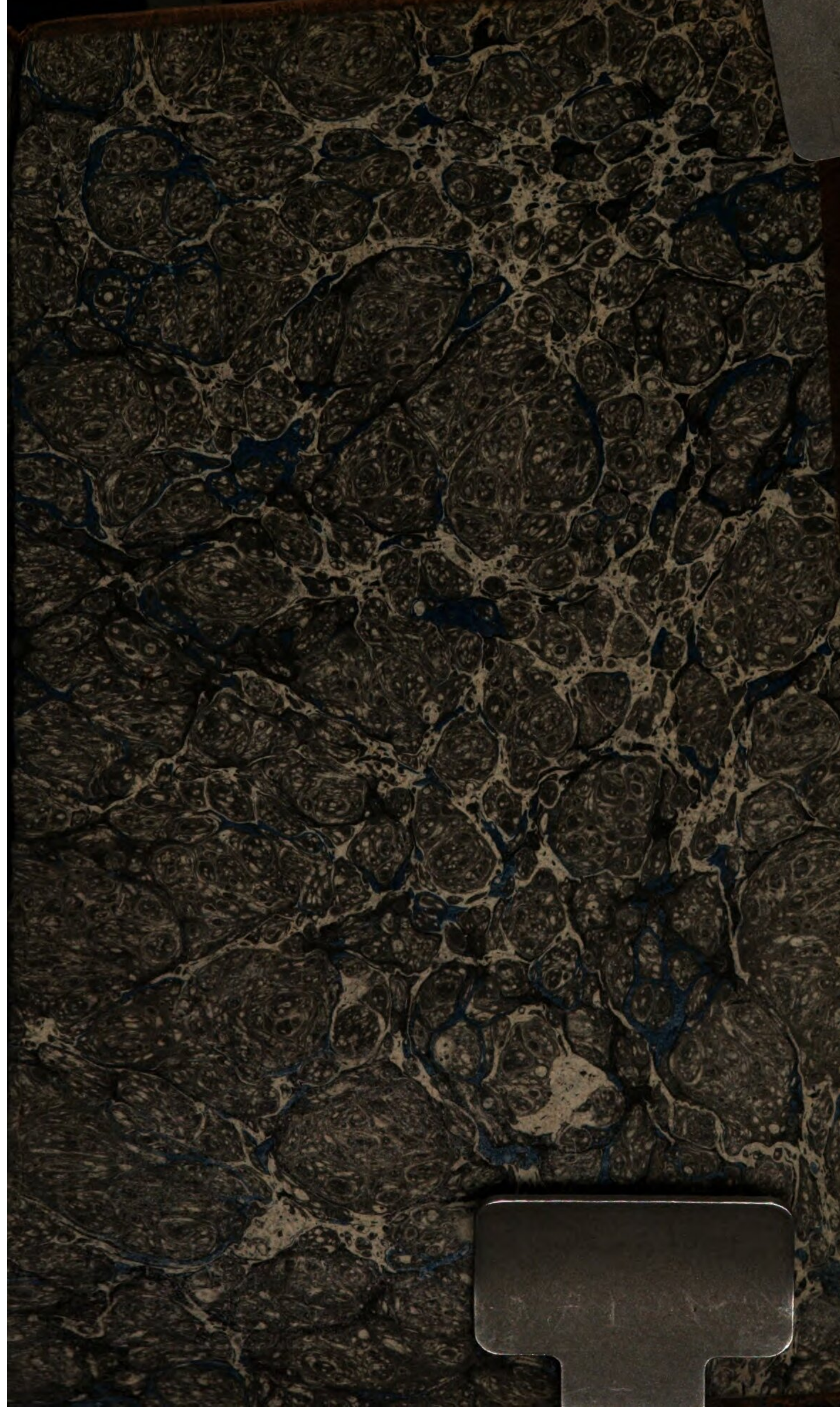
Your humble Servant,

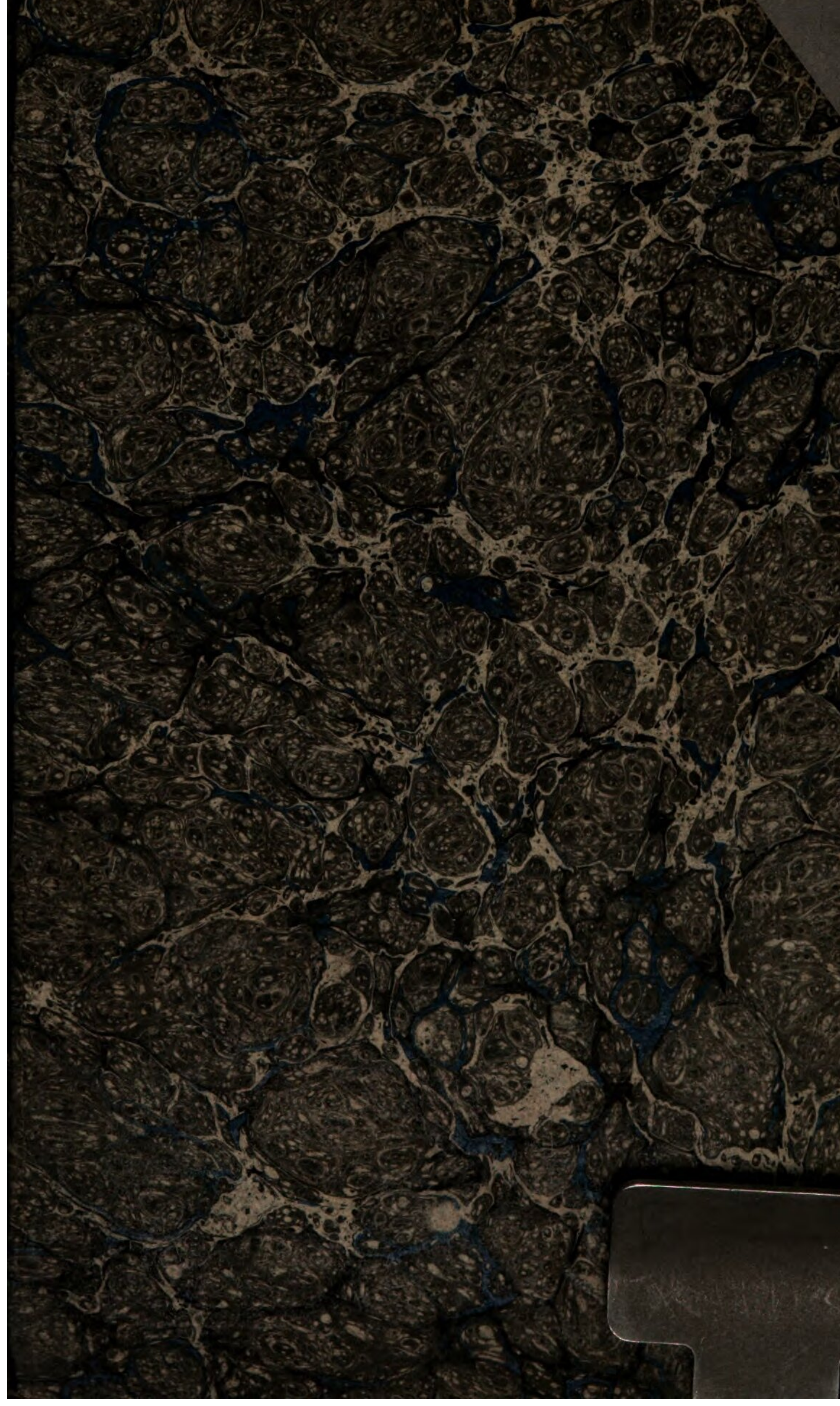
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1671.

T. B.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.







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Dr. Eachard's Works

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